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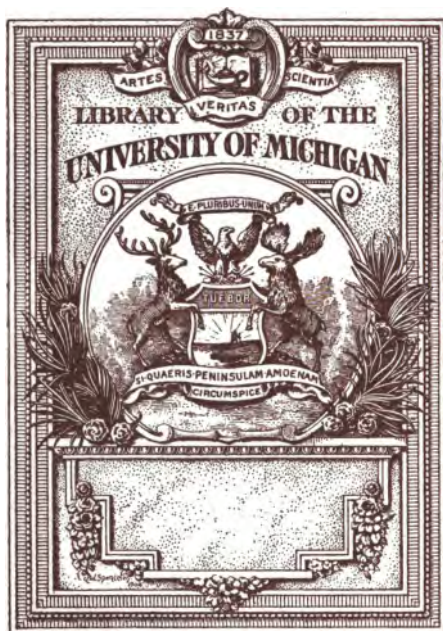
ENGLISH

SONNETS



EDITED BY  
A. C. LITTLE  
WITH INTRODUCTION  
BY THE EDITOR

REVISED EDITION



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## ENGLISH SONNETS









JOHN MILTON.

*Frontispiece.*

# English Sonnets

80746

Edited, with Introduction and Notes,

by

*Arthur  
Quiller-Couch*  
A. T. Quiller-Couch

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## INTRODUCTION

*"The Sonnet—both thing and name—comes to us from the Italian."*<sup>1</sup> Etymologically, sonnetto (from sonare, "to play upon an instrument") is a little poem with instrumental accompaniment: just as canzone is a poem intended to be sung merely, and ballata a poem accompanied with dancing.

But as a matter of fact the earliest sonnetti discoverable have a proper precision of form to which the ballad and song have never yet attained, and, most likely, never will attain. We cannot trace them back beyond the thirteenth century: but the sonnets of Lodovico della Vernaccia, Pier delle Vigne, Guido Guinicelli,

<sup>1</sup> Mark Pattison. Introduction to the Sonnets of John Milton.

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*Jacopo da Lentino, Guittone d'Arezzo and others,*<sup>1</sup> mostly dating between 1200 and 1250, scarcely differ in structure from the sonnet which Petrarch practised and handed down as a model to the present day. We will discuss the structure by and by.

Among these early Italians, Fra Guittone d'Arezzo—he was not a monk, but wore the prefix as a member of the half-religious, half-military order of Cavalieri di Santa Maria—seems somehow to have walked off with the credit of having perfected the sonnet as an instrument: insomuch that Mr. Capel Lofft, who edited an anthology of sonnets early in the present century,<sup>2</sup> salutes him as the Columbus of poetic literature. With what justice we are asked to prefer him above his brethren does not quite appear. But it seems certain that he enjoyed a great reputation in his own day, and by it gave a certain cachet to the sonnet-form which he approved and employed. Dante himself (1265—1321), who considered Fra Guittone an over-estimated person, uses the word “sonnet” of

<sup>1</sup> The English reader will find some account of these early Italian singers, with illustrative translations of their work, in D. G. Rossetti's *Dante and his Circle*. Part II. Poets chiefly before Dante.

<sup>2</sup> Capel Lofft, *Laura* 1813-14.

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two forms of composition only ; and one of these, and by far the more usual, is Guittone's form ; the other being an arrangement of two sestetis followed by two quatrains—with which we need not trouble ourselves. Guittone's form was finally lifted and sealed supreme by Petrarch's adoption (1304—1374), and as the Petrarchan we may henceforth speak of it.

The Petrarchan sonnet, then, has a matter and form of its own. In substance it is a reflective poem on love, or at least in some mood of love. It has a unity of its own, and must be the expression of a single thought or feeling. In structure it obeys the following rules :

1. It consists of fourteen lines ; each line having five beats or musical stresses.
2. The lines must rhyme : and in the disposition of its rhymes the sonnet divides into two systems, the first eight lines forming the major system, and the remaining six the minor.

The major system of eight lines, or two quatrains, is called the octave : the minor system of six lines, or two tercets, is called the sestet.

3. The octave must contain two rhyme-sounds only : and although in some Petrarchan sonnets

*we find these arranged in simple alternation (A B, A B, A B, A B), in an octave of the normal type lines 1, 4, 5, 8 will rhyme together, and lines 2, 3, 6, 7 will rhyme together upon a different note (A B B A, A B B A).*

4. *The sestet may contain either two or three rhyme-sounds : but none of these must repeat or resemble the rhyme-sounds of the octave. And some hold that, to be perfectly normal, the sestet should have the division between its tercets clearly marked: thus e.g. we may have C D C, D C D, or C D E, C D E, besides other variations.*

5. *In expressing what the poet has to say, the sonnet must adapt itself to the intention of its length or structure. The octave should present the poet's idea, the sestet apply it : or the octave should introduce and develop an image, the sestet give back the general reflection suggested by it. In either case there will be a marked pause between the two.*

*Besides this indispensable pause, there should be—we may take it as a counsel of perfection and a rule subject to many conditions of expediency—two lesser pauses ; the first between the two quatrains of the octave, the second between the two tercets of the sestet. Thus a Petrarchan*

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*sonnet ordered upon a Platonic idea of perfection—upon a model “laid up somewhere in the heavens”—would run somewhat as follows: The first quatrain introduces the poet's thought or mood: after a slight pause, “as of one who is turning over what has been said in the mind to enforce it further,” the second quatrain develops it: then after a deep pause, the minor system opens, and the first tercet takes up the thought and applies it or reveals a deeper suggestiveness; and the concluding tercet sums up the whole matter in a general reflection.*

*Such then was the Petrarchan sonnet in matter and form; and such in matter and form (subject to minor experiments and variations) the sonnet remained in the hands of Michael Angelo, Tasso, and the great Italians; of Camoens; and of Ronsard, Du Bellay and the early French sonneteers.*

*The first English sonnets appeared in the year 1557, in the book commonly known as Tottel's Miscellany. It had for its formal title ‘Songes and sonnettes written by the ryght honorable lorde Henry Howard, late earle of Surrey and other’: and was in fact the first and posthumous edition of the poems of the Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt, with*



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other pieces by contemporaries named and unnamed. The editor, Nicholas Grimald (whose name suggests Grimaldi and an Italian parentage<sup>1</sup>) avows the source of his poets' inspiration, and hopes by their experiments to prove that "the English tongue can earn like praise with the Italian and other." Tottel's Miscellany marks the opening of an epoch in the history of English song—an epoch of Italian influence which lasted for more than a century, and was not fairly superseded by the influence of France until the Restoration. Wyatt and Surrey together brought the sonnet into England: nor can we say positively of this pair that one gave a lead to the other. But if one must have the credit, the probabilities favour Wyatt. He was the elder: he had spent some time in Italy, which Surrey never visited: and he keeps more closely by the Petrarchan model, from which the sonnets of Surrey diverge, and on lines which subsequent Elizabethan poets steadily widened.

For these English experimenters, while constant to the Petrarchan tradition that in substance the sonnet should be a short reflective

<sup>1</sup> Professor Henry Morley. *English Writers*, vol. viii. pp. 51-52.

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*poem on love, in structure allowed themselves a licence of innovation which gradually evolved a type so unlike the Petrarchan that some critics have believed it a plant of independent growth, indigenous to our island.<sup>1</sup> Others, such as the late Mr. Mark Pattison, will have nothing to do with it, and go so far as to declare that the immortal sonnets of Shakespeare (written on this model) are "not sonnets at all"!—the aim of such criticism being apparently the composite one of vindicating pedantry on the one hand and saving expense of labour on the other. "If it had been recognised," says Mr. Pattison, "that the so-called sonnets of Shakespeare are not sonnets at all, any more than those of Lord Brooke, but a continuous poem, or poems, written in fourteen-line stanzas, as Tennyson's In Memoriam is, largely, in sixteen-line stanzas, how much misplaced skill would have been saved!" It is usually possible to save yourself trouble by considering something as something else, especially if you thereby remove it from the category of things you happen to be studying into the category of things on which you propose to bestow no attention: but that you serve the*

<sup>1</sup> This theory was advanced by Mr. Hall Caine, *Sonnets of Three Centuries*.

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interests of sound criticism by this process seems disputable; and yet more disputable when you ignore an author's plain intention. One solid reason (among many) why the Sonnets of Shakespeare are sonnets, while the stanzas of In Memoriam are not, is that Shakespeare was endeavouring to write sonnets, and Tennyson was endeavouring to do nothing of the sort.

On the evolution of this Shakespearian type we may say a few words. Wyatt observed generally the Petrarchan form in the two opening quatrains (A B B A, A B B A), and the Petrarchan use of three rhymes in the second part of the sonnet: but he did not observe ~~Petrarch's avoidance of couplets in the second part.~~ He closed every sonnet with a couplet, and this innovation had far-reaching results. Surrey, in the ardour of experiment, attempted many different arrangements of rhyme, but always closed with a couplet; and to this conclusion Spenser was equally loyal. Its expressive value (and it has great expressive value, deny it who will) effaced for a time, in the appreciation of our poets, the more subtly expressive value of the octave and sestet, with their pauses. These vanished as it grew more and more the main business of the sonnet to

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*lead up to a couplet which clinched, as it were, the thought of the preceding lines with something of an epigrammatic stroke: until we find the structure of Surrey's loosest experiments adopted by Daniel and Shakespeare as the final type of English sonnet—the easy form of four quatrains and a couplet all independently rhymed.*

*Here are the two forms for comparison:*

Petrarcan		Shakespearian	
$\left. \begin{array}{l} A \\ B \\ B \\ A \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$ Octave	$\left. \begin{array}{l} A \\ B \\ A \\ B \end{array} \right\} 1$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$ Quatrains
$\left. \begin{array}{l} A \\ B \\ B \\ A \end{array} \right\}$		$\left. \begin{array}{l} C \\ D \\ C \\ D \end{array} \right\} 2$	
$\left. \begin{array}{l} C \\ D \\ E \end{array} \right\}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$ Sestet	$\left. \begin{array}{l} E \\ F \\ E \\ F \end{array} \right\} 3$	
$\left. \begin{array}{l} C \\ D \\ E \end{array} \right\}$		$\left. \begin{array}{l} G \\ G \end{array} \right\}$ Couplet	

*But not even Shakespeare could make the genius of our language content with this form.*

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More learned poets—Ben Jonson in his *Sonnet to the Lady Mary Worth*, Donne (whose fine *Sonnet to Death* will be found on p. 75), and Drummond of Hawthornden—soon reverted to the Petrarchan octave for its superior neatness: and Drummond, especially, composed sonnets in large numbers (mostly translations or imitations) which might fairly be called Petrarchan, but for their final couplets. No English writer could yet find it in his heart to end the sonnet otherwise.

Petrarchan in substance it had always remained—an exercise upon the theme of love, usually of hopeless or unsuccessful love: and the theme had fairly exhausted itself in sugared and artificial conceits, when a great poet arose and reformed the English sonnet in substance as well as structure.

Milton—scholar that he was—recognised the beauty of the Petrarchan type and revived its rhyme-arrangement, octave and sestet, with this difference—he obliterated the pauses. A Miltonic sonnet sweeps from opening to close without a break; it glows “as if he had cut his diamond in such a way that only one luminous light was visible to us”: or again, “he considered—so we may infer—that the English

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sonnet should be like a revolving sphere, every portion becoming continuously visible, with no break in the continuity of thought or expression anywhere apparent."<sup>1</sup> In one example only—that addressed to Cromwell—did he admit the final couplet. For a true specimen of the noble impetuous Miltonic movement the reader should study the famous "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints. . . ."

But his great and enduring reform was one of substance. To each one of the poets who became colleagues in the Latin Secretaryship under the Protectorate there seems to have come the desire to discover some English vehicle for the Horatian Ode—that singular product so much easier to recognise than describe. Marvel attempted and scored one great success. I refer, of course, to his Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's return from Ireland, and may quote again the often quoted lines on Charles's execution, to exemplify its spirit and its stanzas:

"He nothing common did, or mean,  
Upon that memorable scene,  
But with his keener eye  
The axe's edge did try ;

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. William Sharp. *The Sonnet*, prefixed to his *Sonnets of This Century*.

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*Nor called the gods with vulgar spite  
To vindicate his helpless night;  
But bowed his comely head  
Down as upon a bed."*

*Though a success, it had no progeny. Milton, steering wider of Horace's *Alcaics*, chose a verse-form ready to his hand—the Sonnet. "If," says Mr. Robert Bridges,<sup>1</sup> "we compare, for example, his *Cyriack*, whose grandsire, with *Martiis coelebs* or *Æli vetusto*, there can be no doubt that Milton was here deliberately using the sonnet form to do the work of Horace's tight stanzas; and not the whole of Shakespeare's or Petrarch's sonnets set alongside will show enough kinship with these sonnets of Milton to draw them away from their affinity with Horace."*

*But, like many another great artist, Milton carried his experiment to issues far beyond his original aim. His sonnets were no chamber exercises: each owed its inspiration to a real occasion, and that inspiration of reality lifted it high above mere simulation of the Horatian mode. "Each person, thing, or fact is a moment in Milton's life on which he was stirred; sometimes in the soul's depths, sometimes on the*

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Keats*, printed as a Critical Introduction to the Poems of Keats, edited by G. Thorn Drury.

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surface of feeling, but always truly moved. . .  
It is a man who is speaking to us, not an artist  
attitudinising to please us."<sup>1</sup>

"In his hand  
The Thing became a Trumpet whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains——"

And when, after a slumber of a hundred years, the sonnet awoke again in England, it awoke with Milton's seal on its brow. Wordsworth narrates that "in the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion with the dignified simplicity and harmony that runs through most of them,—in character so different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakespeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote except an irregular one at school."<sup>2</sup>

Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Keats, Rossetti, Mrs. Browning—these are confessedly the great sonneteers of our language; and though all will not agree in accounting

<sup>1</sup> Mark Pattison.

<sup>2</sup> The irregular sonnet referred to is No. 125 in our collection. "Calm is all nature as a resting wheel. . ."  
Written, perhaps, as early as 1786.



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*Wordsworth the greatest, few will deny that his finest sonnets were harder to spare than any other's finest. They combine the reality, the "alive-ness" of Milton's with a more general and more permanent applicability: their verity is universal, and appeals to the conscience of all men. It is given to few to take more than an historical interest in the question of parochial endowment and others which agitated the Long Parliament. Only the initiated will listen with entire patience (because with understanding) to the arcana of love as uttered by Shakespeare and Rossetti; or sympathise with the languors of Keats, or with the passionate doubts of Mrs. Browning. But dull indeed would he be of soul who could pass by such a sonnet as Wordsworth's "The world is too much with us . . ." or his valedictory sonnet to Duddon, with its immortal close. "To find," says Mr. John Morley,<sup>1</sup> "beautiful and pathetic language, set to harmonious numbers, for the common impressions of meditative minds, is no small part of the poet's task." It was the part which Wordsworth performed to perfection. His poetry, as Johnson said of Gray's Elegy, "abounds with images*

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to the Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, 1893.

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*which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo."* "I never before," records George Eliot, "met with so many of my own feelings expressed just as I should like them." On the response of the common conscience of men Wordsworth's sonnets may rely for their perpetual justification.

For his form Wordsworth went back to the true Petrarchan, reintroducing the pause which Milton had slurred, and reassigning to the octave and sestet their proper functions. By the favour of such artists as Mrs. Browning, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, Mr. William Watson, Mr. Watts-Dunton, Mr. Gosse, and Mr. Andrew Lang, and by all but unanimous consent of the critics, the Petrarchan form has ever since retained its pride of place. Keats to be sure (whose sonnets some lovers of poetry rank next to Shakespeare's; though on what ground it is hard to see) provides the dissentients with a sorely needed support; almost all his early sonnets being Petrarchan in system and all his later ones Shakespearian. But the deliberate reversion of one poet, even of Keats's quality, cannot seriously shake the great mass of modern authority.

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*It is customary for those who write on this subject to give rules by which a good sonnet may be constructed. But our aim here is not to assist the reader in this or any form of composition. The sonnet has immense popularity just at present, among versifiers. Critics, on the other hand, begin to discover impatience with a form capable of enshrining so much verse of which one can only say, with Charles Lamb, "it discovers much tender feeling; it is most like Petrarch of any foreign Poet, or what we might have supposed Petrarch would have written if Petrarch had been born a fool!" It is hoped that a small volume containing specimens of the best English sonnet-writing of the past will provide the reader with a corrective and a touch-stone of taste. Certainly the study of these specimens ought to assure him that the Sonnet is no arbitrary or haphazard invention; that its length and its peculiar structure were not fixed on by chance; but that every rule has its reason; and that (in a phrase which I may be allowed to repeat) it is the men big enough to break the rules who accept and observe them most cheerfully.*

A. T. QUILLER-COUCH

## ENGLISH SONNETS

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✚ Sir Thomas Wyatt  
(1503-1542)

THE LOVER FOR SHAMEFASTNESS HIDETH HIS DESIRE  
WITHIN HIS FAITHFUL HEART

THE long Love that in my thought I harbour  
And in my heart doth keep his residence,  
Into my face preaseth with bold pretence,  
And there campeth, displaying his banner.  
She that me learns to love and to suffer,  
And wills that my trust and lust's negligence  
Be ruled by reason, shame and reverence,  
With his hardiness takes displeasure.  
Wherewith Love to the heart's forest he fleeth,  
Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry ;  
And there him hideth and not appeareth.  
What may I do, when my master feareth,  
But in the field with him to live and die ?  
For good is the life, ending faithfully.

**Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey**

(1518-1546-7)

DESCRIPTION OF SPRING: WHEREIN EACH THING  
RENEWES, SAVE ONLY THE LOVER

THE soote season, that bud and bloom furth  
brings,

With green hath clad the hill and eke the  
vale,

The nightingale with feathers new she sings ;

The turtle to her mate hath told her tale.

Summer is come, for every spray now springs,

The hart hath hung his old head on the  
pale ;

The buck in brake his winter coat he flings ;

The fishes flete with new repaired scale ;

The adder all her slough away she slings ;

The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale ;

The busy bee her honey now she mings ;

Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.

And thus I see among these pleasant  
things

Each care decays, and yet my sorrow  
springs.

*Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey*

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A VOW TO LOVE FAITHFULLY, HOWSOEVER HE BE  
REWARDED

SET me whereas the sun doth parch the green,  
Or where his beams do not dissolve the ice;  
In temperate heat, where he is felt and seen;  
In presence prest of people mad or wise;  
Set me in high, or yet in low degree;  
In longest night, or in the shortest day;  
In clearest sky, or where clouds thickest be;  
In lusty youth, or when my hairs are gray:  
Set me in heaven, in earth, or else in hell,  
In hill, or dale, or in the foaming flood;  
Thrall, or at large, alive whereso I dwell,  
Sick, or in health, in evil fame, or good,  
Hers will I be; and only with this  
thought  
Content myself, although my chance be  
nought.

*Earl of Surrey.*

*Sir Edward Dyer*

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**Sir Edward Dyer**

(*cir.* 1540-1607)

THE SHEPHERD'S CONCEIT OF PROMETHEUS

PROMETHEUS, when first from heaven high  
He brought down fire, ere then on earth  
unseen,

Fond of the light, a satyr, standing by,  
Gave it a kiss, as it like sweet had been.

Feeling forthwith the other's burning power,  
Wood<sup>1</sup> with the smart, with shouts and  
shriekings shrill,

He sought his ease in river, field and bower,  
But for the time his grief went with him still.  
So silly I, with that unwonted sight,

In human shape an angel from above,  
Feeding mine eyes, th' impression there did  
light,

That since I run and rest as pleaseth Love.

The difference is, the satyr's lips, my  
heart,—

He for a while, I evermore have smart.

<sup>1</sup> Wild.

**Sir Walter Raleigh**

(1552-1618)

A VISION UPON THE FAERY QUEEN

METHOUGHT I saw the grave where Laura  
lay,

Within that temple where the vestal flame  
Was wont to burn ; and passing by that way  
To see that buried dust of living fame,  
Whose tomb fair Love and fairer Virtue kept,  
All suddenly I saw the Faery Queen :  
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept ;  
And from thenceforth those Graces were not  
seen,

For they this Queen attended ; in whose stead  
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.  
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,  
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens  
did pierce,

Where Homer's spright did tremble all  
for grief,

And cursed the access of that celestial  
thief.



*Edmund Spenser*

---

**Edmund Spenser**

(1553-1598)

TO HIS BOOK

HAPPY ye leaves whenas those lily hands,  
Which hold my life in their dead-doing  
might,  
Shall handle you, and hold in love's soft bands,  
Like captives trembling at the victor's sight :  
And happy lines, on which with starry light  
Those laming eyes will deign sometime to  
look  
And read the sorrows of my dying sprite,  
Written with tears in heart's close bleeding  
book :  
And happy rhymes, bathed in the sacred  
brook  
Of *Helicon*, whence she derivèd is,  
When ye behold that angel's blessèd look,  
My soul's long lackèd food, my heaven's  
bliss :  
Leaves, lines, and rhymes, seek her to  
please alone,  
Whom if ye please, I care for other none.

RUDELY thou wrongest my dear heart's desire,  
In finding fault with her too portly pride :  
The thing which I do most in her admire,  
Is of the world unworthy most envied ;  
For in those lofty looks is close implied  
Scorn of base things, and 'sdeign of foul dis-  
honour,  
Threatening rash eyes which gaze on her so  
wide,  
That loosely they ne dare to look upon her.  
Such pride is praise, such portliness is honour,  
That boldened innocence bears in her eyes ;  
And her fair countenance, like a goodly  
banner,  
Spreads in defiance of all enemies.  
Was never in this world ought worthy  
tried,<sup>1</sup>  
Without some spark of such self-pleasing  
pride.

<sup>1</sup> Proved to be worthy.

THE merry Cuckoo, messenger of Spring,  
His trumpet shrill hath thrice already  
sounded ;  
That warns all lovers wait upon their king,  
Who now is coming forth with garland  
crownèd.  
With noise whereof the choir of birds re-  
sounded  
Their anthems sweet devisèd of Love's praise;  
That all the woods their echoes back re-  
bounded,  
As if they knew the meaning of their lays.  
But 'mongst them all which did Love's honour  
raise,  
No word was heard of her that most it  
ought :  
But she his precept idly disobeys,  
And doth his idle message set at nought.  
Therefore O Love, unless she turn to thee,  
Ere Cuckoo end, let her a rebel be !

THIS holy season, fit to fast and pray,  
Men to devotion ought to be inclined :  
Therefore I likewise on so holy day  
For my sweet saint some service fit will find.  
Her temple fair is built within my mind,  
In which her glorious image placèd is,  
On which my thoughts do day and night  
attend,  
Like sacred priests that never think amiss !  
There I to her, as the author of my bliss,  
Will build an altar to appease her ire,  
And on the same my heart will sacrifice,  
Burning in flames of pure and chaste desire:  
The which vouchsafe O . goddess ! to  
accept,  
Amongst thy dearest relics to be kept.

FAIR Proud ! now tell me, why should fair be  
proud ?

Sith all world's glory is but dross unclean,  
And in the shade of death itself shall shroud,

However now thereof ye little ween !

That goodly idol, now so gay beseen,  
Shall doff her flesh's borrowed fair attire,

And be forgot as it had never been,  
That many now much worship and admire !  
Ne any then shall after it inquire,

Ne any mention shall thereof remain,  
But what this verse, that never shall expire,  
Shall to you purchase, with her thankless  
pain.

Fair ! be no longer proud of that 'shall  
perish ;

But that which shall you make immortal  
cherish.

*Edmund Spenser*

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LIKE as a ship that through the ocean wide, *a*  
By conduct of some star, doth make her way, *b*  
Whenas a storm hath dimmed her trusty guide, *a*  
Out of her course doth wander far astray,— *b*  
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright  
ray *b*  
Me to direct, with clouds is overcast, *c*  
Do wander now, in darkness and dismay, *b*  
Through hidden perils round about me placed; *c*  
Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past, *c*  
My Helice, the lodestar of my life, *d*  
Will shine again, and look on me at last, *c*  
With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief. *d*  
Till then I wander careful, comfortless, *e*  
In secret sorrow and sad pensiveness. *e*

MARK when she smiles with amiable cheer,  
And tell me whereto can ye liken it—  
When on each eyelid sweetly do appear  
An hundred Graces as in shade to sit?  
Likest it seemeth to my simple wit  
Unto the fair sunshine in summer's day,  
That, when a dreadful storm away is flit,  
Through the broad world doth spread his  
goodly ray :  
At sight whereof each bird that sits on spray,  
And every beast that to his den was fled,  
Comes forth afresh out of their late dismay,  
And to the light lift up their drooping head.  
So my storm-beaten heart likewise is  
cheer'd  
With that sunshine when cloudy looks are  
clear'd.

LIKE as a huntsman after weary chase,  
Seeing the game from him escaped away,  
Sits down to rest him in some shady place,  
With panting hounds beguiled of their  
prey :  
So, after long pursuit and vain assay,  
When I all weary had the chase forsook,  
The gentle deer returned the self-same way,  
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next  
brook.  
There she beholding me with milder look,  
Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide,  
Till I in hand her yet half-trembling took,  
And with her own good will her firmly tied.  
Strange things meseemed, to see a beast  
so wild  
So goodly won, with her own will be-  
guiled !



Most glorious Lord of life ! that on this day  
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,  
And having harrowed hell didst bring away  
Captivity thence captive, us to win :  
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin;  
And grant that we, for whom Thou diddest  
die,  
Being with thy dear blood clean washed from  
sin,  
May live for ever in felicity,  
And that thy love we weighing worthily,  
May likewise love Thee for the same again ;  
And for thy sake, that all like dear didst buy,  
With love may one another entertain.  
So let us love, dear Love, like as we  
ought :  
Love is the lesson which the Lord us  
taught.

FRESH Spring, the herald of Love's mighty  
King,

In whose cote-armour richly are display'd  
All sorts of flowers the which on earth do  
spring

In goodly colours gloriously array'd,—  
Go to my Love, where she is careless laid  
Yet in her Winter's bower not well awake :

Tell her the joyous time will not be stay'd  
Unless she do him by the fore-lock take :  
Bid her therefore herself soon ready make

To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew :  
Where every one that misseth then her make,<sup>1</sup>  
Shall be by him amerced with penance due.

Make haste therefore, sweet Love, whilst  
it is prime,

For none can call again the passèd time.

<sup>1</sup> Mate.

*Edmund Spenser*

---

ONE day I wrote her name upon the strand,  
But came the waves and washèd it away :  
Again I wrote it with a second hand,  
But came the tide and made my pains his  
prey.

---

Vain man (said she), that dost in vain assay  
A mortal thing so to immortalise ;

For I myself shall like to this decay,  
And eke my name be wipèd out likewise.  
Not so (quod I) ; let baser things devise

To die in dust, but you shall live by fame ;  
My verse your virtues rare shall eternise,  
And in the heavens write your glorious  
name :

---

Where, whenas Death shall all the world  
subdue,

Our love shall live, and later life renew.

LIKE as the Culver<sup>1</sup> on the barèd bough  
Sits mourning for the absence of her mate ;  
And in her song sends many a wishful vow  
For his return that seems to linger late.  
So I alone now left disconsolate  
Mourn to myself the absence of my love :  
And wand'ring here and there all desolate  
Seek with my plaints to match that mournful  
dove.  
Ne joy of aught that under heaven doth hove  
Can comfort me, but her own joyous sight  
Whose sweet aspect both God and man can  
move  
In her unspotted pleasance to delight.  
Dark is my day whiles her fair light I  
miss,  
And dead my life that wants such lively  
bliss.

*Edmund Spenser.*

<sup>1</sup> Dove.

*John Florio*

---

**John Florio**

(1553-1625)

CONCERNING THE HONOUR OF BOOKS

SINCE honour from the honourer proceeds,  
How well do they deserve that memorize  
And leave in Books for all posterities  
The names of worthies and their virtuous  
deeds :

When all their glory else, like water-weeds  
Without their element, presently dies,  
And all their greatness quite forgotten lies,  
And when and how they flourished no man  
heeds !

How poor remembrances are statues, tombs,  
And other monuments that men erect  
To princes, which remain in closed rooms  
Where but a few behold them, in respect  
Of Books, that to the universal eye  
Show how they lived ; the other where  
they lie !

**Sir Philip Sidney**

(1554-1586)

WITH how sad steps, O Moon ! thou climb'st  
the skies !

How silently, and with how wan a face !

What ! may it be that even in heavenly  
place

That busy archer his sharp arrows tries ?

Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes

Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case ;

I read it in thy looks : thy languished grace,

To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.

Then, even of fellowship, O Moon ! tell me,

Is constant love deemed there but want of  
wit ?

Are beauties there as proud as here they be ?

Do they above love to be loved, and yet

Those lovers scorn whom that love doth  
possess ?—

Do they call virtue there ungratefulness ?

*Sir Philip Sidney*

---

COME, Sleep, O Sleep! the certain knot of  
peace,

The bailing place of wit, the balm of woe,  
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,  
The indifferent judge between the high and  
low ;

With shield of proof shield me from out the  
prease

Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth  
throw :

Oh, make in me those civil wars to cease !

~~I will good tribute pay if thou do so.~~

Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,  
A chamber deaf to noise and blind of light,  
A rosy garland and a weary head :

And if these things, as being thine by right,  
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in  
me

Livelier than elsewhere Stella's image see.

*Sir Philip Sidney*

---

HIGHWAY ! since you my chief Parnassus be,  
And that my Muse, to some ears not un-  
sweet,

Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet  
More oft than to a chamber melody, —

Now blessèd you, bear onward blessèd me

To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall  
meet ;

My Muse and I must you of duty greet,  
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully.

Be you still fair, honoured by public heed,

By no encroachment wronged, nor time  
forgot,

Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful  
deed ;

And that you know I envy you no lot

Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,

Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may  
kiss !



*Sir Philip Sidney*

---

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,  
By just exchange one for the other given ;  
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss ;  
There never was a better bargain driven.  
His heart in me keeps me and him in one ;  
My heart in him his thoughts and senses  
guides ;  
He loves my heart, for once it was his own ;  
I cherish his because in me it bides.  
His heart his wound received from my sight ;  
My heart was wounded with his wounded  
heart :  
For as from me on him his hurt did light,  
So still methought in me his hurt did smart.  
Both equal hurt, in this change sought one  
bliss :  
My true love hath my heart, and I have  
his.

*Sir Philip Sidney*

---

LEAVE me, O Love, which reachest but to  
dust,

And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things !  
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust :

Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.

Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might

To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms  
be,

Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the  
light

That doth both shine and give us sight to  
see.

Oh, take fast hold ! let that light be thy guide

In this small course which birth draws out  
to death,

And think how evil becometh him to slide

Who seeketh heaven, and comes of heavenly  
breath.

Then farewell, world ! thy uttermost I see :

Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me !

*'Splendidis longum valedico nugis*

*Sir Philip Sidney.*

**Thomas Lodge**

(1556?-1625)

O SHADY vales, O fair enrichèd meads,  
O sacred woods, sweet fields, and rising  
mountains ;  
O painted flowers, green herbs where Flora  
treads,  
Refresh'd by wanton winds and wat'ry  
fountains !  
O all you wingèd choristers of wood,  
That perch'd aloft your former pains report,  
And straight again recount with pleasant  
mood  
Your present joys in sweet and seemly sort !  
O all you creatures whosoever thrive  
On mother earth, in seas, by air, by fire !—  
More blest are you than I here under sun :  
Love dies in me, whenas he doth revive  
In you : I perish under beauty's ire,  
Where after storms, winds, frosts, your life is  
won.

**Robert Greene**

(1560-1592)

AH ! were she pitiful as she is fair,  
Or but as mild as she is seeming so,  
Then were my hopes greater than my despair,  
Then all the world were heaven, nothing woe.  
Ah ! were her heart relenting as her hand,  
That seems to melt even with the mildest  
touch,  
Then knew I where to seat me in a land  
Under wide heavens, but yet there is none  
such.  
So as she shows she seems the budding rose,  
Yet sweeter far than is an earthly flower ;  
Sov'ran of beauty, like the spray she grows ;  
Compass'd she is with thorns and canker'd  
bower.  
Yet were she willing to be pluck'd and  
worn,  
She would be gather'd, though she grew  
on thorn.

**Henry Constable**

(1562-1613)

TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S SOUL

GIVE pardon, blessed soul, to my bold cries,  
If they (importune) interrupt thy song  
Which now, with joyful notes, thou sing'st  
among  
The angel-quiristers of heavenly skies ;  
Give pardon eke, sweet soul, to my slow cries,  
That since I saw thee now it is so long,  
And yet the tears that unto thee belong  
To thee as yet they did not sacrifice.  
I did not know that thou wert dead before,  
I did not feel the grief I did sustain :  
The greater stroke astonisheth the more,  
Astonishment takes from us sense of pain.  
I stood amazed when others' tears begun,  
And now begin to weep when they have  
done.

TO SAINT KATHARINE

BECAUSE thou wast the daughter of a king,  
Whose beauty did all Nature's works exceed,  
And wisdom wonder to the world did breed,  
A muse might rouse itself on Cupid's wing ;  
But, sith the graces which from nature spring  
Were graced by those which from grace did  
    proceed,  
And glory have deserved, my Muse doth  
    need  
An angel's feathers when thy praise I sing.  
For all in thee became angelical :  
    An angel's face had angels' purity,  
And thou an angel's tongue didst speak withal ;  
    Lo ! why thy soul, set free by martyrdom,  
Was crowned by God in angels' company,  
And angels' hands thy body did entomb.

*Henry Constable.*

**Samuel Daniel**

(1562-1619)

FAIR is my Love, and cruel as she's fair ;  
Her brow shades frowns, although her eyes  
are sunny,  
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride  
despair,  
And her disdains are gall, her favours honey:  
A modest maid, deck'd with a blush of  
honour,  
Whose feet do tread green paths of youth  
and love ;  
The wonder of all eyes that look upon her,  
Sacred on earth, design'd a Saint above.  
Chastity and beauty, which were deadly foes,  
Live reconcilèd friends within her brow ;  
And had she pity to conjoin with those,  
Then who had heard the complaints I utter now?  
For had she not been fair, and thus un-  
kind,  
My Muse had slept, and none had known  
my mind.

My spotless love hovers with purest wings,  
About the temple of the proudest frame,  
Where blaze those lights, fairest of earthly  
things,  
Which clear our clouded world with brightest  
flame.  
My ambitious thoughts, confinèd in her face ;  
Affect no honour but what She can give ;  
My hopes do rest in limits of her grace ;  
I weigh no comfort unless she relieve.  
For She, that can my heart unparadise,  
Holds in her fairest hand what dearest is,  
My Fortune's wheel's the circle of her eyes,  
Whose rolling grace deign once a turn of  
bliss.  
All my life's sweet consists in her alone ;  
So much I love the most Unloving one.



AND yet I cannot reprehend the flight  
Or blame th' attempt presuming so to soar ;  
The mounting venture for a high delight  
Did make the honour of the fall the more :  
For who gets wealth, that puts not from the  
shore?  
Danger hath honour, great designs their  
fame ;  
Glory doth follow, courage goes before ;  
And though th' event oft answers not the  
same,  
Suffice that high attempts have never shame.  
The mean observer, whom base safety keeps  
Lives without honour, dies without a name,  
And in eternal darkness ever sleeps :  
And therefore, *Delia*, 'tis to me no blot  
To have attempted, tho' attain'd thee not.

BEAUTY, sweet Love, is like the morning dew,  
Whose short refresh upon the tender green  
Cheers for a time, but till the sun doth show ;  
And straight 'tis gone as it had never been.  
Soon doth it fade that makes the fairest  
flourish,  
Short is the glory of the blushing rose ;  
The hue which thou so carefully dost nourish,  
Yet which at length thou must be forced to  
lose,  
When thou, surcharged with burthen of thy  
years,  
Shalt bend thy wrinkles homeward to the  
earth ;  
And that, in Beauty's Lease expired, appears  
The Date of Age, the Calends of our Death—  
But ah, no more !—this must not be fore-  
told,  
For women grieve to think they must be  
old.

I MUST not grieve my Love, whose eyes would  
    read  
    Lines of delight, whereon her youth might  
    smile ;  
Flowers have time before they come to seed,  
    And she is young, and now must sport the  
    while.  
And sport, Sweet Maid, in season of these  
    years,  
    And learn to gather flowers before they  
    wither;  
And where the sweetest blossom first appears,  
    Let Love and Youth conduct thy pleasures  
    thither.  
Lighten forth smiles to clear the clouded air,  
    And calm the tempest which my sighs do  
    raise ;  
Pity and smiles do best become the fair ;  
    Pity and smiles must only yield the praise.  
    Make me to say when all my griefs are  
    gone,  
    Happy the heart that sighed for such a  
    one.

CARE-CHARMER Sleep, son of the sable Night,  
    ~~Brother to Death, in silent darkness born,~~  
Relieve my languish and restore the light ;  
    With dark forgetting of my care, return :  
And let the day be time enough to mourn  
    The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth :  
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,  
    Without the torment of the night's untruth.  
Cease dreams, the images of day's desires,  
    To model forth the passions of the morrow ;  
Never let rising Sun approve you liars,  
    To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.  
    Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in  
        vain,  
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

LET others sing of Knights and Paladines,  
In aged accents and untimely words,  
Paint shadows in imaginary lines,  
Which well the reach of their high wit  
records.  
But I must sing of thee, and those fair eyes  
Authentic shall my verse in time to come,  
When yet th' unborn shall say, Lo, where she  
lies !  
Whose beauty made him speak, that else  
was dumb !  
These are the arcs, the trophies I erect,  
That fortify thy name against old age ;  
And these thy sacred virtues must protect  
Against the Dark, and Time's consuming  
rage.  
Though th' error of my youth in them  
appear,  
Suffice, they show I lived, and loved thee  
dear.

*Samuel Daniel.*

**Michael Drayton**

(1563-1613)

CLEAR Anker, on whose silver-sanded shore  
My soul-shrined saint, my fair Idea, lies ;  
O blessèd brook, whose milk-like swans adore  
Thy crystal stream, refinèd by her eyes !  
Where sweet myrrh-breathing Zephyr in the  
spring  
Gently distils his nectar-dropping showers,  
Where nightingales in Arden sit and sing  
Amongst the dainty dew-impearlèd flowers ;  
Say thus, fair brook, when thou shalt see thy  
queen,—  
“ Lo, here thy shepherd spent his wandering  
years,  
And in these shades, dear nymph, he oft hath  
been,  
And here to thee he sacrificed his tears.”  
Fair Arden, thou my Tempe art alone,  
And thou, sweet Anker, art my Helicon.

WHY should your fair eyes with such sovran  
grace

Disperse their rays on every vulgar spirit,  
Whilst I in darkness in the self-same place  
Get not one glance to recompense my merit?  
So doth the plowman gaze the wand'ring star,  
And only rest contented with the light,  
That never learn'd what constellations are  
Beyond the bent of his unknowing sight.  
O why should beauty—custom to obey—  
To their gross sense apply herself so ill?  
Would 'God I were as ignorant as they,  
When I am made unhappy by my skill;  
Only compell'd on this poor good to  
boast—  
Heavens are not kind to them that know  
them most.

LOVE, banished heaven, in earth was held in  
scorn,  
Wandering abroad in need and beggary,  
And wanting friends, though of a goddess  
born,  
Yet craved the alms of such as passèd by ;  
I, like a man devout and charitable,  
Clothèd the naked, lodged this wandering  
guest,  
With sighs and tears still furnishing his table,  
With what might make the miserable blest.  
But this ungrateful, for my good desert,  
Inticed my thoughts against me to conspire,  
Who gave consent to steal away my heart,  
And set my breast, his lodging, on a fire.  
Well, well, my friends, when beggars grow  
thus bold,  
No marvel then though charity grow  
cold !



SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and  
part,—

Nay I have done, you get no more of me ;  
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,

That thus so cleanly I myself can free ;  
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,

And when we meet at any time again,  
Be it not seen in either of our brows

That we one jot of former love retain.

Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,

When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless  
lies,

When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,

And Innocence is closing up his eyes,—

Now if thou wouldst, when all have given  
him over,

From death to life thou mightst him yet  
recover !

*Michael Drayton.*

**Charles Best**

**THE MOON**

Look how the pale queen of the silent night

Doth cause the Ocean to attend upon her,

And he, as long as she is in his sight,

With his full tide is ready her to honour ;

But when the silver waggon of the Moon

Is mounted up so high he cannot follow,

The sea calls home his crystal waves to moan,

And with low ebb doth manifest his sorrow.

So you, that are the sovereign of my heart,

Have all my joys attending on your will,

My joys low-ebbing when you do depart—

When you return, their tide my heart doth

fill :

So as you come, and as you do depart,

Joys ebb and flow within my tender heart.

**Thomas Campion**

(*ob.* 1620)

THRICE toss these oaken ashes in the air,  
And thrice three times tie up this true-  
love's-knot ;  
Thrice sit thee down in this enchanted chair,  
And murmur soft, "She will, or she will  
not."  
Go burn these poisoned weeds in that blue  
fire,  
This cypress gathered at a dead man's grave,  
These screech-owl's feathers, and this pricking  
briar,  
That all thy thorny cares an end may have.  
Then come, you fairies, dance with me a  
round,  
Dance in this circle, let my Love be centre,  
Melodiously breathe out a charming sound,  
Melt her hard heart, that some remorse may  
enter.  
In vain are all the charms I can devise !  
She hath an art to break them with her  
eyes.

**Joshua Sylvester**

(1563-1618)

WERE I as base as is the lowly plain,  
And you, my Love, as high as heaven  
above,  
Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble  
swain,  
Ascend to heaven in honour of my Love.  
Were I as high as heaven above the plain,  
And you, my Love, as humble and as low  
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,  
Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love  
should go.  
Were you the earth, dear Love, and I the  
skies,  
My love should shine on you like to the  
Sun,  
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes  
Till heaven waxed blind, and till the world  
were done.  
Wheresoe'er I am—below or else above  
you—  
Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly  
love you.

**Ignotus**

(From *Musica Transalpina*. 1597)

ZEPHYRUS brings the time that sweetly  
scenteth  
With flowers and herbs which winter's frost  
exileth ;  
Progne now chirpeth, Philomel lamenteth,  
Flora the garlands white and red compileth ;  
Fields do rejoice, the frowning sky relenteth,  
Jove to behold his dearest daughter smileth ;  
The air, the water, the earth to joy consenteth,  
Each creature now to love him reconcileth.  
But with me, wretch, the storms of woe  
perséver,  
And heavy sighs which from my heart she  
straineth,  
That took the key thereof to heaven for ever ;  
So that singing of birds and springtime's  
flow'ring,  
And ladies' love that men's affection gaineth,  
Are like a desert and cruel beasts devouring.





WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

**William Shakespeare**

(1564-1616)

MUSIC to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?  
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in  
joy.

Why lov'st thou that which thou receiv'st not  
gladly,

Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?  
If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,  
By unions married, do offend thine ear,  
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds

In singleness the parts that thou shouldst  
bear.

Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,  
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering,

Resembling sire and child and happy mother  
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:

Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,  
Sings this to thee: "thou single wilt prove none."



WHEN I do count the clock that tells the time,  
And see the brave day sunk in hideous  
night ;  
When I behold the violet past prime,  
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white ;  
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves  
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,  
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves  
Borne on the bier with white and bristly  
beard,  
Then of thy beauty do I question make,  
That thou among the wastes of time must  
go,  
Since sweets and beauties do themselves for-  
sake,  
And die as fast as they see others grow ;  
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can  
make defence  
Save breed, to brave him when he takes  
thee hence.

*William Shakespeare*

---

SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day? *K*

Thou art more lovely and more temperate: *A*  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of  
May, *✓*

And summer's lease hath all too short a  
date; *✓*

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, *c*  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd; *e*  
And every fair from fair sometime declines, *A*  
By chance or nature's changing course un-  
trimm'd; *A*

But thy eternal summer shall not fade *e*  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest: *e*  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his  
shade, *J*

When in eternal lines to time thou growest; *1*

So long as men can breathe or eyes can  
see, *O*

So long lives this and this gives life to  
thee. *✓*

WHEN, in disgrace with fortune and men's  
    eyes,  
    I all alone beweepe my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless  
    cries,  
    And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
    Featured like him, like him with friends  
    possess'd,  
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
    With what I most enjoy contented least ;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
    Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
Like to the lark at break of day arising  
    From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's  
    gate ;  
    For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth  
    brings  
    That then I scorn to change my state with  
    kings.

WHEN to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's  
waste ;  
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless  
night,  
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd  
woe,  
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd  
sight :  
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,  
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,  
Which I now pay as if not paid before.  
But if the while I think on thee, dear  
friend,  
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

THY bosom is endeared with all hearts,  
Which I by lacking have supposed dead,  
And there reigns love and all love's loving  
parts,  
And all those friends which I thought buried.  
How many a holy and obsequious tear  
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine  
eye  
As interest of the dead, which now appear  
But things removed that hidden in thee lie !  
Thou art the grave where buried love doth  
live,  
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,  
Who all their parts of me to thee did give ;  
That due of many now is thine alone :  
Their images I loved I view in thee,  
And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.

If thou survive my well-contented day,  
    When that churl Death my bones with dust  
        shall cover,  
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey  
    These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,  
Compare them with the bettering of the time,  
    And though they be outstripp'd by every  
        pen,  
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,  
    Exceeded by the height of happier men.  
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:  
    " Had my friend's Muse grown with this  
        growing age,  
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,  
    To march in ranks of better equipage ;  
        But since he died and poets better prove,  
        Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his  
        love."

FULL many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign  
eye,  
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,  
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy ;  
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride  
With ugly rack on his celestial face,  
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,  
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace :  
Even so my sun one early morn did shine  
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow ;  
But out, alack ! he was but one hour mine ;  
The region cloud had mask'd him from me  
now.  
Yet him for this my love no whit dis-  
daineth ;  
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's  
sun staineth.

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key  
Can bring him to his sweet up-lockèd treasure,  
The which he will not every hour survey,  
For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.  
Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,  
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,  
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,  
Or captain jewels in the carcanet.  
So is the time that keeps you as my chest,  
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,  
To make some special instant special blest,  
By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.  
Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives  
scope,  
Being had, to triumph, being lack'd, to  
hope.



SWEET love, renew thy force ; be it not said  
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,  
Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,  
To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might :  
So, love, be thou ; although to-day thou fill  
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with  
fulness,  
To-morrow see again, and do not kill  
The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.  
Let this sad interim like the ocean be  
Which parts the shore, where two contracted  
new  
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see  
Return of love, more blest may be the view ;  
Else call it winter, which being full of care  
Makes summer's welcome thrice more  
wish'd, more rare.

BEING your slave, what should I do but tend  
    Upon the hours and times of your desire?  
I have no precious time at all to spend,  
    Nor services to do, till you require.  
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour  
    Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for  
        you,  
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour  
    When you have bid your servant once adieu;  
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought  
    Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,  
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought  
    Save, where you are how happy you make  
        those.  
    So true a fool is love that in your Will,  
    Though you do any thing, he thinks no ill.

LIKE as the waves make towards the pebbled  
shore,

So do our minutes hasten to their end ;  
Each changing place with that which goes  
before,

In sequent toil all forwards do contend.  
Nativity, once in the main of light,  
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,  
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,  
And Time that gave doth now his gift con-  
found.

Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth  
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,  
Feeds on the rarities of Nature's truth,  
And nothing stands but for his scythe to  
mow ;

And yet to times in hope my verse shall  
stand,

Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

WHEN I have seen by Time's fell hand de-  
faced  
The rich proud cost of outworn buried age ;  
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,  
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage :  
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain  
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,  
And the firm soil win of the watery main,  
Increasing store with loss and loss with store ;  
When I have seen such interchange of state,  
Or state itself confounded to decay ;  
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminare,  
That time will come and take my love away.  
This thought is as a death, which cannot  
choose  
But weep to have that which it fears to  
lose.

SINCE brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor bound-  
less sea,

But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,  
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,  
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?  
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out  
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,  
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,  
Nor gates of steel so strong, but time de-  
cays?

O fearful meditation ! where, alack,  
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's quest  
lie hid ?

Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot  
back ?

Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid ?  
O, none, unless this miracle have might,  
That in black ink my love may still shine  
bright.

No longer mourn for me when I am dead  
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell  
Give warning to the world that I am fled  
From this vile world, with vilest worms to  
dwell :

Nay, if you read this line, remember not  
The hand that writ it ; for I love you so  
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot  
If thinking on me then should make you  
woe.

O, if, I say, you look upon this verse  
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,  
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,  
But let your love even with my life decay,  
Lest the wise world should look into your  
moan  
And mock you with me after I am gone.

THAT time of year thou mayst in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do  
hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the  
cold,  
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet  
birds sang.  
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day  
As after sunset fadeth in the west,  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire  
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the death-bed whereon it must expire  
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd  
by.  
This thou perceivest, which makes thy  
love more strong,  
To love that well which thou must leave  
ere long.

FAREWELL! thou art too dear for my possess-  
ing,

And like enough thou know'st thy estimate :  
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing ;  
My bonds in thee are all determinate.

For how do I hold thee but by thy granting ?

And for that riches where is my deserving ?  
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,

And so my patent back again is swerving.  
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not  
knowing,

Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mis-  
taking;

So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,

Comes home again, on better judgment  
making.

Thus have I had thee as a dream doth  
flatter,

In sleep a king, but waking no such  
matter.



THEN hate me when thou wilt ; if ever, now ;  
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to  
cross,  
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,  
And do not drop in for an after-loss :  
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scaped this  
sorrow,  
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe :  
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,  
To linger out a purposed overthrow.  
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,  
When other petty griefs have done their  
spite,  
But in the onset come ; so shall I taste  
At first the very worst of fortune's might,  
And other strains of woe, which now seem  
woe,  
Compared with loss of thee will not seem  
so.

THEY that have power to hurt and will do  
none,

That do not do the thing they most do show,  
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,

Unmovèd, cold, and to temptation slow,  
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces

And husband Nature's riches from expense :  
They are the lords and owners of their faces,  
Others but stewards of their excellence.

The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,  
Though to itself it only live and die,

But if that flower with base infection meet,  
The basest weed outbraves his dignity :

For sweetest things turn sourest by their  
deeds;

Lilies that fester smell far worse than  
weeds.

How like a winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year !  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days  
seen !

What old December's bareness every where !  
And yet this time removed was summer's time,  
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,  
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,  
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' de-  
cease :

Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me  
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit ;  
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
And, thou away, the very birds are mute ;  
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer  
That leaves look pale, dreading the  
winter's near.

FROM you have I been absent in the spring,  
When proud-pied April dress'd in all his  
trim  
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,  
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with  
him.  
Yet nor the lays of birds nor the sweet smell  
Of different flowers in odour and in hue  
Could make me any summer's story tell,  
Or from their proud lap pluck them where  
they grew ;  
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,  
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose ;  
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,  
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.  
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,  
As with your shadow I with these did  
play.

THE froward violet thus did I chide :  
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet  
that smells,  
If not from my love's breath? The purple  
pride  
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion  
dwells  
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.  
The lily I condemned for thy hand,  
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair :  
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,  
One blushing shame, another white despair ;  
A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both,  
And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath ;  
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth  
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.  
More flowers I noted, yet I none could  
see  
But sweet or colour it had stol'n from  
thee.

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in  
seeming ;

I love not less, though less the show appear :  
That love is merchandised whose rich esteem-  
ing

The owner's tongue doth publish every  
where.

Our love was new and then but in the spring,

When I was wont to greet it with my lays,  
As Philomel in summer's front doth sing

And stops her pipe in growth of riper days :  
Not that the summer is less pleasant now  
Than when her mournful hymns did hush  
the night,

But that wild music burthens every bough

And sweets grown common lose their dear  
delight.

Therefore like her I sometime hold my  
tongue,

Because I would not dull you with my  
song.

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,  
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,  
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters  
cold  
Have from the forests shook three summers'  
pride,  
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn  
turn'd  
In process of the seasons have I seen,  
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,  
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are  
green.  
Ah ! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,  
Steal from his figure and no pace perceived ;  
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth  
stand,  
Hath motion and mine eye may be deceived :  
For fear of which, hear this, thou age  
unbred :  
Ere you were born was beauty's summer  
dead.

WHEN in the chronicle of wasted time  
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme  
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,  
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,  
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,  
I see their antique pen would have express'd  
Even such a beauty as your master now.  
So all their praises are but prophecies  
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;  
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,  
They had not skill enough your worth to  
sing:  
For we, which now behold these present  
days,  
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to  
praise.



*William Shakespeare*

---

NOT mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to  
come,

Can yet the lease of my true love control,

Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured

And the sad augurs mock their own presage ;

Incertainties now crown themselves assured,

And peace proclaims olives of endless age.

Now with the drops of this most balmy time

My love looks fresh, and death to me sub-  
scribes,

Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,

While he insults o'er dull and speechless  
tribes:

And thou in this shalt find thy monument,

When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass  
are spent.

*William Shakespeare*

---

O, NEVER say that I was false of heart,  
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify,  
As easy might I from myself depart  
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth  
lie:

That is my home of love : if I have ranged,  
Like him that travels I return again,  
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,  
So that myself bring water for my stain.  
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd  
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,  
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,  
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good ;  
For nothing this wide universe I call,  
Save thou, my rose ; in it thou art my all.

LET me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove :  
O, no ! it is an ever-fixèd mark  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken :  
It is the star to every wandering bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height  
be taken.  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and  
cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error and upon me proved,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

THE expense of spirit in a waste of shame  
Is lust in action ; and till action, lust  
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,  
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,  
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight,  
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had  
Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait  
On purpose laid to make the taker mad ;  
Mad in pursuit and in possession so ;  
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme ;  
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe ;  
Before, a joy proposed ; behind, a dream.  
All this the world well knows ; yet none  
knows well  
To shun the heaven that leads men to this  
hell.

POOR soul, the centre of my sinful earth,  
[Sport of] these rebel powers that thee array,  
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,  
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?  
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,  
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?  
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,  
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?  
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,  
And let that pine to aggravate thy store:  
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;  
Within be fed, without be rich no more:  
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds  
on men,  
And Death once dead, there's no more  
dying then.

*William Shakespeare.*

**Barnaby Barnes**

(1568-9-1609)

AH, sweet Content, where is thy mild abode?

Is it with shepherds and light-hearted swains  
Which sing upon the downs and pipe abroad,  
Tending their flocks and cattle on the  
plains?

Ah, sweet Content, where dost thou safely  
rest?

In heaven, with angels which the praises  
sing

Of Him that made, and rules at His behest,  
The minds and hearts of every living thing?

Ah, sweet Content, where doth thine harbour  
hold?

Is it in churches with religious men  
Which please the gods with prayers manifold,  
And in their studies meditate it then?—

Whether thou dost in heaven or earth  
appear,

Be where thou wilt, thou wilt not harbour  
here.

**John Davies**

(1570-1626)

WHILES in my Soul I feel the soft warm hand  
Of Grace, to thaw the frozen dregs of sin,  
She, angel, armed, on Eden's walls doth stand,  
To keep out outward joys that would come  
in ;

But when that holy hand is ta'en away,  
And that my Soul congealeth as before,  
She outward comforts seeks with care each  
way,

And runs to meet them at each sense's door.  
Yet they but at the first sight only please,  
Then shrink, or breed abhorred satiety ;  
But divine comforts, far unlike to these,  
Do please the more, the more they stay  
and be.

Then outward joys I inwardly detect,  
Sith they stay not, or stay but in unrest.

**John Donne**

(1573-1631)

DEATH, be not proud, though some have  
    callèd thee *a*  
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so ; *b*  
For those whom thou think'st thou dost *b*  
    overthrow  
Die not, poor Death ; nor yet canst thou kill *a*  
    me.  
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures *a*  
    be,  
    Much pleasure : then from thee much more *b*  
    must flow ;  
    And soonest our best men with thee do go— *b*  
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery ! *a*  
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and *c*  
    desperate men,  
    And dost with poison, war, and sickness *b*  
    dwell ;  
    And poppy or charms can make us sleep as *b*  
    well,  
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st *c*  
    thou then ?  
    One short sleep past, we wake eternally,  
    And death shall be no more : Death, thou  
    shalt die.



**Richard Barnfield**

(1574-1627)

TO HIS FRIEND MAISTER R. L.

IN PRAISE OF MUSIC AND POETRY

IF music and sweet poetry agree,  
As they must needs, the sister and the  
brother,  
Then must the love be great 'twixt thee and  
me,  
Because thou lov'st the one, and I the  
other.  
Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly  
touch  
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense ;  
Spenser to me, whose deep conceit is such  
As passing all conceit needs no defence.  
Thou lov'st to hear the sweet melodious sound  
That Phoebus' lute, the queen of music,  
makes ;  
And I in deep delight am chiefly drowned  
Whenas himself to singing he betakes.  
One god is god of both, as poets feign ;  
One knight loves both, and both in thee  
remain.

**William Alexander, Earl of Stirling**

(1580-1640)

OH, if thou knew'st how thou thyself dost  
harm,  
And dost prejudice thy bliss, and spoil my  
rest ;  
Then thou wouldst melt the ice out of thy  
breast,  
And thy relenting heart would kindly warm.  
Oh, if thy pride did not our joys controul,  
What world of loving wonders shouldst thou  
see !  
For if I saw thee once transformed in me,  
Then in thy bosom I would pour my soul,  
Then all thy thoughts should in my visage  
shine ;  
And if that ought mischanced, thou shouldst  
not moan  
Nor bear the burthen of thy griefs alone ;  
No, I would have my share in what were  
thine :  
And whilst we thus should make our  
sorrows one,  
This happy harmony would make them  
none.

*William Alexander, Earl of Stirling*

---

SMALL comfort might my banish'd hopes  
recall

When 'whiles my dainty fair I sighing see ;  
If I could think that one were shed for me,  
It were a guerdon great enough for all :  
Or would she let one tear of pity fall  
That seem'd dismiss'd from a remorseful  
eye,

I could content myself ungrieved to die,  
And nothing might my constancy appall.  
The only sound of that sweet word of  
"love,"

Press'd 'twixt those lips that do my doom  
contain,  
—Were I embarked—might bring me back  
again

From death to life, and make me breathe  
and move.

Strange cruelty ! that never can afford  
So much as once one sigh, one tear, one  
word !

*William Alexander, Earl of Stirling.*

**William Drummond**

(1585-1649)

SLEEP, Silence' child, sweet father of soft rest,  
Prince whose approach peace to all mortal  
brings,

Indifferent host to shepherds and to kings,  
Sole comforter of minds with grief opprest ;

~~Lo ! by thy charming-rod all breathing  
things~~

Lie slumbering, with forgetfulness possest,  
And yet o'er me to spread thy drowsy wings  
Thou spares, alas ! who cannot be thy guest.

~~Since I am thine, oh come, but with that face  
To inward light which thou art wont to  
show ;~~

With feigned solace ease a true-felt woe ;  
Or if, deaf god, thou do deny that grace,  
Come as thou wilt, and that thou wilt  
bequeath,—

I long to kiss the image of my death.

*William Drummond of Hawthornden*

---

ALEXIS, here she stayed ; among these pines,  
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair ;  
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,  
More rich than that brought from the Colchian  
mines ;

She set her by these muskèd eglantines—  
The happy place the print seems yet to  
bear ;

Her voice did sweeten here thy sugared lips,  
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did  
lend their ear ;

Me here she first perceived, and here a morn  
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face ;  
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were  
born,

And I first got a pledge of promised grace ;  
But ah ! what served it to be happy so,  
Sith, passèd pleasures double but new  
Noe ?

*William Drummond of Hawthornden*

---

My life, be as thou wast when thou didst  
grow

With thy green mother in some shady grove,  
When immelodious winds but made thee  
more,

And birds on thee their ramble<sup>1</sup> did bestow.

Sith that dear voice which did thy sounds  
approve,

Which used in such harmonious strains to  
flow,

Is left from earth to tune those spheres  
above,

What art thou but a harbinger of woe?

Thy pleasing notes be pleasing notes no more

But orphan wailings to the fainting ear;

Each stop a sigh, each sound draws forth a  
tear;

Be therefore silent as in woods before:

Or if that any hand to touch thee deign,

Like widowed turtle still her loss com-  
plain.

<sup>1</sup> Music of the bough, woodland songs

SWEET Spring, thou turn'st with all thy goodly  
train,  
Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright  
with flowers ;  
The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,  
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their  
showers :  
Thou turn'st, sweet youth ; but ah ! my  
pleasant hours  
And happy days with thee come not again :  
The sad memorials only of my pain  
Do with thee turn, which turn my sweets  
in sours.  
Thou art the same which still thou wast be-  
fore,  
Delicious, wanton, amiable, fair ;  
But she, whose breath embalmed thy whole-  
some air,  
Is gone ; nor gold nor gems her can restore.  
Neglected Virtue ! seasons go and come,  
While thine, forgot, lie closèd in a tomb.

WHAT doth it serve to see Sun's burning face,  
And skies enamelled with both Indies' gold?  
Or moon at night in jetty chariot rolled,  
And all the glory of that starry place?

What doth it serve earth's beauty to behold,—  
The mountains' pride, the meadows' flowery  
grace,  
The stately comeliness of forests old,  
The sport of floods which would themselves  
embrace?

What doth it serve to hear the sylvans' songs,  
The wanton merle, the nightingale's sad  
strains,

Which in dark shades seem to deplore my  
wrongs?—

For what doth serve all that this world  
contains?—

Sith she for whom those once to me were  
dear

No part of them can have now with me  
here!



*William Drummond of Hawthornden*

---

NO TRUST IN TIME

LOOK how the flower which lingeringly doth  
fade,  
The morning's darling late, the summer's  
queen,  
Spoiled of that juice which kept it fresh and  
green,  
As high as it did raise, bows low the head :  
Right so my life, contentments being dead,  
Or in their contraries but only seen,  
With swifter speed declines than erst it spread,  
And blasted, scarce now shows what it hath  
been.  
As doth the pilgrim therefore, whom the  
night  
By darkness would imprison on his way,  
Think on thy home, my soul, and think aright  
Of what yet rests thee of life's wasting day !  
Thy sun posts westward, passèd is thy  
morn,  
And twice it is not given thee to be born.

*William Drummond of Hawthornden*

---

THE BOOK OF THE WORLD

OF this fair volume which we World do name,

    If we the sheets and leaves could turn with  
    care,

Of Him who it corrects and did it frame,

    We clear might read the art and wisdom  
    rare :

Find out His power which wildest powers doth  
    tame,

    His providence extending everywhere,

    His justice which proud rebels doth not  
    spare,

In every page, no period of the same.

But silly we, like foolish children, rest

    Well pleased with coloured vellum, leaves  
    of gold,

Fair dangling ribbons, leaving what is best,

    On the great writer's sense ne'er taking  
    hold ;

    Or if by chance we stay our minds on  
    aught,

    It is some picture on the margin wrought.

THE BAPTIST

THE last and greatest herald of heaven's King,  
Girt with rough skins, hies to the deserts  
wild,  
Among that savage brood the woods forth  
bring,  
Which he than man more harmless found  
and mild.  
His food was locusts, and what there doth  
spring,  
With honey that from virgin hives distilled ;  
Parcht body, hollow eyes, some uncouth  
thing  
Made him appear, long since from earth  
exiled.  
There burst he forth : All ye whose hopes  
rely  
On God, with me amidst these deserts  
mourn,  
Repent, repent, and from old errors turn !—  
Who listened to his voice, obeyed his cry ?  
Only the echoes, which he made relent,  
Rung from their flinty caves, Repent !  
Repent !

THE MAGDALEN

THESE eyes, dear Lord ! once brandons of  
    desire,  
    Frail scouts betraying what they had to  
    keep,  
Which their own heart, then others set on fire,  
    Their traitrous black before Thee here out-  
    weep :  
These locks, of blushing deeds the fair attire,  
    Smooth-frizzled waves, sad shelves which  
    shadow deep,  
    Soul-stinging serpents in gilt curls which  
    creep,  
To touch Thy sacred feet do now aspire.  
In seas of care behold a sinking bark,  
    By winds of sharp remorse unto Thee  
    driven ;  
Oh, let me not exposed be ruin's mark !  
    My faults confest—Lord, say they are for-  
    given !  
    Thus sighed to Jesus the Bethanian fair,  
    His tear-wet feet still drying with her  
    hair.

*William Drummond of Hawthornden*

---

TO A NIGHTINGALE

SWEET bird, that sing'st away the early hours,  
Of winters past or coming void of care,  
Well pleased with delights which present  
are,  
Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling  
flowers ;  
To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy  
bowers  
Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,  
And what dear gifts on thee He did not  
spare,  
A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.  
What soul can be so sick which by thy songs,  
Attired in sweetness, sweetly is not driven  
Quite to forget earth's turmoils, spites, and  
wrongs,  
And lift a reverend eye and thought to  
heaven !  
Sweet artless songster, thou my mind dost  
raise  
To airs of spheres, yes, and to angels'  
lays.

CONTENT AND RESOLUTE

As when it happeneth that some lovely town  
Unto a barbarous besieger falls,  
Who there by sword and flame himself in-  
stalls,  
And, cruel, it in tears and blood doth drown ;  
Her beauty spoiled, her citizens made thralls,  
His spite yet so can not her all throw down  
But that some statue, arch, fane of renown  
Yet lurks unmaimed within her weeping  
walls :  
So, after all the spoil, disgrace, and wrack,  
That time, the world, and death, could  
bring combined,  
Amidst that mass of ruins they did make,  
Safe and all scarless yet remains my mind.  
From this so high transcending rapture  
springs,  
That I, all else defaced, not envy kings.

*William Drummond.*

**William Browne of Tavistock**

(1590-1645)

A ROSE, as fair as ever saw the north,  
Grew in a little garden all alone :  
A sweeter flower did Nature ne'er put forth,  
Nor fairer garden yet was never known.  
The maidens danced about it morn and noon,  
And learned bards of it their ditties made ;  
The nimble fairies, by the pale-faced moon,  
Watered the root, and kissed her pretty  
shade.  
But, welladay ! the gardener careless grew,  
The maids and fairies both were kept away,  
And in a drought the caterpillars threw  
Themselves upon the bud and every spray.  
God shield the stock ! If heaven send no  
supplies,  
The fairest blossom of the garden dies.

**George Herbert**

(1593-1632)

SIN

LORD, with what care hast Thou begirt us  
round !

Parents first season us ; then schoolmasters  
Deliver us to laws ; they send us bound  
To rules of reason, holy messengers,  
Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,  
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,  
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,  
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises ;  
Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,  
The sound of glory ringing in our ears ;  
Without, our shame ; within, our consciences ;  
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.  
Yet all these fences and their whole array  
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.



**William Habington**

(1605-1645)

LOVE'S ANNIVERSARY

TO THE SUN

THOU art returned, great light, to that blest  
hour

In which I first by marriage, sacred power,  
Joined with Castara hearts: and as the same  
Thy lustre is, as then, so is our flame;  
Which had increased, but that by love's decree  
'Twas such at first it ne'er could greater be.

But tell me, glorious lamp, in thy survey  
Of things below thee, what did not decay  
By age to weakness?—I since that have seen  
The rose bud forth and fade, the tree grow  
green

And wither, and the beauty of the field  
With winter wrinkled. Even thyself dost  
yield

Something to time, and to thy grave fall  
nigher;—

But virtuous love is one sweet endless  
fire.

*John Milton*

---

**John Milton**

(1608-1674)

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

O NIGHTINGALE ! that on yon bloomy spray  
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are  
still,  
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart  
dost fill,  
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.  
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,  
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,  
Portend success in love. O, if Jove's will  
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft  
lay,  
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate  
Foretell my hopeless doom, in some grove  
nigh ;  
As thou from year to year hast sung too late  
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why.  
Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,  
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

ON HIS HAVING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF  
TWENTY-THREE

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,  
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth  
year !

My hasting days fly on with full career,  
But my late spring no bud or blossom  
shew'th.

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth  
That I to manhood am arrived so near ;

And inward ripeness doth much less appear,  
That some more timely happy spirits indu'th.

Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,

It shall be still in strictest measure even

To that same lot, however mean or high,

Toward which Time leads me, and the will  
of Heaven.

All is, if I have grace to use it so,

As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye.

*John Milton*

---

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY  
CAPTAIN or Colonel, or Knight in Arms,  
Whose chance on these defenceless doors  
may seize,  
If deed of honour did thee ever please,  
Guard them, and him within protect from  
harms.  
He can requite thee ; for he knows the charms  
That call fame on such gentle acts as  
these,  
And he can spread thy name o'er lands  
and seas,  
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.  
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower :  
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare  
The house of Pindarus, when temple and  
tower  
Went to the ground ; and the repeated air  
Of sad Electra's poet had the power  
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth,  
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and  
the green,

And with those few art eminently seen  
That labour up the hill of heavenly Truth,  
The better part with Mary and with Ruth  
Chosen thou hast; and they that over-  
ween,

And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,  
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.  
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends  
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of  
light,

And hope that reaps not shame. There-  
fore be sure  
Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastful  
friends

Passes to bliss at the mid-hour of night,  
Hast gained thy entrance, virgin wise  
and pure.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY

DAUGHTER to that good Earl, once President  
Of England's Council and her Treasury,  
Who lived in both unstained with gold or  
fee,  
And left them both, more in himself content,  
Till the sad breaking of that Parliament  
Broke him, as that dishonest victory  
At Chæroneæ, fatal to liberty,  
Killed with report that old man eloquent,  
Though later born than to have known the  
days  
Wherein your father flourished, yet by  
you,  
Madam, methinks I see him living yet :  
So well your words his noble virtues praise  
That all both judge you to relate them  
true  
And to possess them, honoured Margaret.

*John Milton*

---

TO MR. H. LAWES ON HIS AIRS

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measured song  
First taught our English music how to  
span

Words with just note and accent, not to  
scan

With Midas' ears, committing short and long,  
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the  
throng,

With praise enough for Envy to look wan ;

To after age thou shalt be writ the man

That with smooth air couldst humour best our  
tongue.

Thou honour'st Verse, and Verse must send  
her wing

To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus'  
quire,

That tunest their happiest lines in hymn  
or story.

Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee  
higher

Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing,

Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

*John Milton*

---

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE  
THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DECEASED  
DEC. 16, 1646

WHEN Faith and Love, which parted from  
thee never,  
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with  
God,  
Meekly thou didst resign this earthy load  
Of death, called life, which us from life doth  
sever.  
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good en-  
deavour,  
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were  
trod ;  
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,  
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.  
Love led them on ; and Faith, who knew them  
best  
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple  
beams  
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,  
And speak the truth of thee on glorious  
themes  
Before the Judge ; who thenceforth bid thee  
rest,  
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.



*John Milton*

---

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL, MAY 1652  
ON THE PROPOSALS OF CERTAIN MINISTERS AT THE  
COMMITTEE FOR PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a  
cloud

Not of war only, but detractions rude,  
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,  
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast  
ploughed,

And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud  
Hast reared God's trophies, and His work  
pursued,

While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots  
imbrued,

And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,  
And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet much  
remains

To conquer still; Peace hath her victories  
No less renowned than War: new foes arise,  
Threatening to bind our souls with secular  
chains.

Help us to save free conscience from the  
paw

Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their  
maw.

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel  
old,

Than whom a better senator ne'er held  
The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms,  
repelled

The fierce Epirot and the African bold,  
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold

The drift of hollow states hard to be spelled ;  
Then to advise how war may, best upheld,  
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,  
In all her equipage ; besides, to know

Both spiritual power and civil, what each  
means,

What severs each, thou hast learned, which  
few have done.

The bounds of either sword to thee we owe :

Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans  
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

*John Milton*

---

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints,  
whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold ;  
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of  
old,  
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and  
stones,  
Forget not : in Thy book record their groans  
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient  
fold  
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled  
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their  
moans  
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they  
To heaven. Their martyred blood and  
ashes sow  
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth  
sway  
The triple Tyrant ; that from these may  
grow  
A hundredfold, who, having learnt Thy way,  
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

WHEN I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and  
wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more  
bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest He, returning, chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not  
need  
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who  
best  
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best.  
His state  
Is kingly : thousands at His bidding speed,  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

*John Milton*

---

TO MR. LAWRENCE

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,  
Now that the fields are dank, and ways  
are mire,  
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by  
the fire  
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won  
From the hard season gaining? Time will  
run  
On smoother, till Favonius reinspire  
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire  
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.  
What neat repast shall feast us, light and  
choice,  
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may  
rise  
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?  
He who of those delights can judge, and  
spare  
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

TO CYRIACK SKINNER

CYRIACK, whose grandsire on the royal bench  
Of British Themis, with no mean applause,  
Pronounced, and in his volumes taught,  
our laws,

Which others at their bar so often wrench,  
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to  
drench

In mirth that after no repenting draws ;  
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,  
And what the Swede intend, and what the  
French.

To measure life learn thou betimes, and know  
Toward solid good what leads the nearest  
way ;

For other things mild Heaven a time  
ordains,  
And disapproves that care, though wise in  
show,

That with superfluous burden loads the day,  
And, when God sends a cheerful hour,  
refrains.

TO THE SAME

CYRIACK, this three years' day these eyes,  
though clear,  
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,  
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot ;  
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear  
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,  
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not  
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a  
jot  
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou  
ask ?  
The conscience, friend, to have lost them  
overplied  
In Liberty's defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.  
This thought might lead me through the  
world's vain mask  
Content, though blind, had I no better  
guide.

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint  
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,  
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband  
gave,  
Rescued from Death by force, though pale and  
faint.  
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed  
taint  
Purification in the Old Law did save,  
And such as yet once more I trust to have  
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,  
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.  
Her face was veiled ; yet to my fancied  
sight  
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person  
shined  
So clear as in no face with more delight.  
But, oh ! as to embrace me she inclined,  
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my  
night.

*John Milton.*



**Thomas Edwards**

(1699-1757)

TO RICHARD OWEN CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, with whom, my pilot and my  
guide,  
Pleased I have traversed thy Sabrina's flood,  
Both where she foams impetuous, soiled  
with mud,  
And where she peaceful rolls her golden tide ;  
Never, oh, never let ambition's pride  
(Too oft pretextèd with our country's good),  
And tinselled pomp, despised when under-  
stood,  
Or thirst of wealth, thee from her banks  
divide !  
Reflect how calmly, like her infant wave,  
Flows the clear current of a private life ;  
See the wide public stream, by tempests  
tost,  
Of every changing wind the sport or slave,  
Soiled with corruption, vexed with party  
strife,  
Covered with wrecks of peace and honour  
lost.

**Thomas Gray**

(1706-1771)

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST

IN vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire ;  
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire :  
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine,  
A different object do these eyes require ;  
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,  
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.  
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier  
men ;  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear,  
To warm their little loves the birds complain :  
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,  
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

**William Mason**

(1725-1797)

ANNIVERSARY. FEB. 23, 1795

A PLAINTIVE sonnet flowed from Milton's pen  
When Time had stolen his three-and-twentieth year :

Say, shall not I then shed one tuneful tear,  
Robbed by the thief of three-score years and ten?

No ! for the foes of all life-lengthened men,  
Trouble and toil, approach not yet too near ;  
Reason, meanwhile, and health, and memory dear

Hold unimpaired their weak yet wonted reign :

Still round my sheltered lawn I pleased can stray ;

Still trace my sylvan blessings to their spring :

BEING of BEINGS ! yes, that silent lay  
Which musing Gratitude delights to sing,  
Still to thy sapphire throne shall Faith convey,  
And Hope, the cherub of unwearied wing.

**Thomas Warton**

(1728-1790)

WHEN late the trees were stript by Winter  
pale,  
Young Health, a dryad-maid in vesture  
green,  
Or like the forest's silver-quiver'd queen,  
On airy uplands met the piercing gale ;  
And, ere its earliest echo shook the vale,  
Watching the hunter's joyous horn was seen.  
But since, gay-thron'd in fiery chariot sheen,  
Summer has smote each daisy-dappled dale,  
She to the cave retires, high-arched beneath  
The fount that laves proud Isis' towery  
brim ;  
And now all glad the temperate air to  
breathe,  
While cooling drops distil from arches  
dim,  
Binding her dewy locks with sedgy wreath  
She sits amid the quire of Naiads trim.

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF DUGDALE'S  
'MONASTICON'

DEEM not devoid of elegance the sage,  
By Fancy's genuine feelings unbeguiled,  
Of painful pedantry the poring child,  
Who turns of these proud domes the historic  
page,  
Now sunk by Time and Henry's fiercer rage.  
Think'st thou the warbling Muses never  
smiled  
On his lone hours? Ingenuous views engage  
His thoughts, on themes, unclassic falsely  
styled,  
Intent. While cloistered Piety displays  
Her mouldering roll, the piercing eye ex-  
plores  
New manners, and the pomp of elder days,  
Whence culls the pensive bard his pictured  
stores.  
Nor rough nor barren are the winding ways  
Of hoar Antiquity, but strewn with flowers.

*Thomas Warton*

---

TO THE RIVER LODON

AH ! what a weary race my feet have run,  
Since first I trod thy banks with alders  
crowned,  
And thought my way was all through fairy  
ground,  
Beneath thy azure sky and golden sun :  
Where first my Muse to lisp her notes begun !  
While pensive Memory traces back the  
round  
Which fills the varied interval between ;  
Much pleasure, more of sorrow, marks the  
scene.  
Sweet native stream ! those skies and suns so  
pure  
No more return, to cheer my evening road !  
Yet still one joy remains,—that not obscure,  
Nor useless, all my vacant days have flowed,  
From youth's gay dawn to manhood's prime  
mature ;  
Nor with the Muse's laurel unbestowed.

*Thomas Warton.*

**William Cowper**

(1731-1800)

TO HENRY COWPER, ON HIS DEFENCE OF WARREN  
HASTINGS IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

COWPER, whose silver voice, task'd sometimes  
hard

Legends prolix delivers in the ears  
(Attentive when thou read'st) of England's  
peers,

Let verse at length yield thee thy just reward.  
Thou wast not heard with drowsy disregard,  
Expending late on all that length of plea  
Thy generous pow'rs ; but silence honoured  
thee,

Mute as e'er gazed on orator or bard.  
Thou art not voice alone ; but hast beside  
Both heart and head ; and couldst with  
music sweet

Of Attic phrase and senatorial tone,  
Like thy renown'd forefathers, far and wide  
Thy fame diffuse, praised not for utterance  
meet

Of other's speech, but magic of thy own.

*William Cowper*

---

TO MRS. UNWIN

MARY ! I want a lyre with other strings,  
Such aid from heaven as some have feigned  
they drew,  
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new  
And undebased by praise of meaner things ;  
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,  
I may record thy worth with honour due,  
In verse as musical as thou art true,  
And that immortalizes whom it sings.  
But thou hast little need. There is a Book  
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly  
light,  
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,  
A chronicle of actions just and bright ;—  
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary,  
shine ;  
And since thou own'st that praise, I spare  
thee mine.

*William Cowper.*



*Anna Seward*

---

**Anna Seward**

(1747-1809)

DECEMBER MORNING

I LOVE to rise ere gleams the tardy light,  
Winter's pale dawn ; and as warm fires  
illuminate,  
And cheerful tapers shine around the room,  
Through misty windows bend my musing sight,  
Where, round the dusky lawn, the mansions  
white,  
With shutters closed, peer faintly through  
the gloom  
That slow recedes ; while yon grey spires  
assume,  
Rising from their dark pile, an added height  
By indistinctness given.— Then to decree  
The grateful thoughts to God, ere they unfold  
To friendship or the Muse, or seek with glee  
Wisdom's rich page. O hours more worth  
than gold,  
By whose blest use we lengthen life, and, free  
From drear decays of age, outlive the old !

**Charlotte Smith**

(1749-1806)

SWEET poet of the woods, a long adieu !

Farewell, soft minstrel of the early year !

Ah ! 'twill be long ere thou shalt sing anew,

And pour thy music on the night's dull ear.

Whether on spring thy wandering flights  
await,

Or whether silent in our groves you dwell,

The pensive Muse shall own you for her mate,

And still protect the song she loves so well.

With cautious step the lovelorn youth shall  
glide

Thro' the lone glade that shades thy mossy  
nest,

And shepherd-girls from eyes profane shall  
hide

The gentle bird who sings of pity best ;

For still thy voice shall soft affections  
move,

And still be dear to sorrow and to love.

*John Codrington Bamfylde*

---

**John Codrington Bamfylde**

(1754-1796)

ON A WET SUMMER

ALL ye who far from town in rural hall,  
Like me, were wont to dwell near pleasant  
field,  
Enjoying all the sunny day did yield,  
With me the change lament, in irksome thrall,  
By rains incessant held ; for now no call  
From early swain invites my hand to wield  
The scythe. In parlour dim I sit concealed,  
And mark the lessening sand from hour-glass  
fall ;  
Or 'neath my window view the wistful train  
Of dripping poultry, whom the vine's broad  
leaves  
Shelter no more. Mute is the mournful plain ;  
Silent the swallow sits beneath the thatch,  
And vacant hind hangs pensive o'er his  
hatch,  
Counting the frequent drips from reeded  
eaves.

**Thomas Russell**

1762-1788

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN AT LEMNOS

ON this lone isle, whose rugged rocks affright  
The cautious pilot, ten revolving years  
Great Pæan's son, unwonted erst to tears,  
Wept o'er his wound : alike each rolling light  
Of heaven he watched, and blamed its lingering flight ;  
By day the sea-mew screaming round his cave  
Drove slumber from his eyes ; the chiding wave  
And savage howlings chased his dreams by night.  
Hope still was his : in each low breeze that sighed  
Through his rude grot he heard a coming oar,  
In each white cloud a coming sail he spied ;  
Nor seldom listened to the fancied roar  
Of Cæta's torrents, or the hoarser tide  
That parts famed Trachis from the Euboic shore.

**Helen Maria Williams**

(1762-1828)

TO HOPE

O EVER skilled to wear the form we love !  
To bid the shapes of fear and grief depart ;  
Come, gentle Hope ! with one gay smile remove  
The lasting sadness of an aching heart.  
Thy voice, benign enchantress ! let me hear ;  
Say that for me some pleasures yet shall  
bloom,—  
That fancy's radiance, friendship's precious  
tear,  
Shall soften, or shall chase, misfortune's  
gloom.  
But come not glowing in the dazzling ray  
Which once with dear illusions charmed my  
eye ;  
Oh, strew no more, sweet flatterer ! on my  
way  
The flowers I fondly thought too bright to  
die :  
Visions less fair will soothe my pensive  
breast,  
That asks not happiness, but longs for  
rest.

**Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges**

(1762-1837)

ON ECHO AND SILENCE

IN eddying course when leaves began to fly,  
And Autumn in her lap the store to strew,  
As 'mid wild scenes I chanced the Muse to  
woo,  
Through glens untrod and woods that frowned  
on high,  
Two sleeping nymphs with wonder mute I  
spy !—  
And lo, she's gone !—in robe of dark green  
hue,  
'Twas Echo from her sister Silence flew :  
For quick the hunter's horn resounded to the  
sky !  
In shade affrighted Silence melts away.  
Not so her sister !—hark, for onward still  
With far-heard step she takes her listening  
way,  
Bounding from rock to rock, and hill to  
hill !  
Ah, mark the merry maid in mockful play  
With thousand mimic tones the laughing  
forest fill.

**William Lisle Bowles**

(1762-1850)

OSTEND

ON HEARING THE BELLS AT SEA

How sweet the tuneful bells' responsive peal !

As when at opening dawn the fragrant  
breeze

Touches the trembling sense of pale disease,  
So piercing to my heart their force I feel.

And hark ! with lessening cadence now  
they fall,

And now along the white and level tide

They fling their melancholy music wide ;

Bidding me many a tender thought recall  
Of summer days, and those delightful years

When by my native streams, in life's fair  
prime,

The mournful magic of their mingling  
chime

First waked my wondering childhood into  
tears !

But seeming now, when all those days  
are o'er,

The sounds of joy once heard and heard  
no more.

O TIME ! who know'st a lenient hand to lay  
Softest on sorrow's wound, and slowly  
thence,  
Lulling to sad repose the weary sense,  
The faint pang stealest unperceived away ;  
On thee I rest my only hope at last,  
And think, when thou hast dried the bitter  
tear  
That flows in vain o'er all my soul held dear,  
I may look back on every sorrow past,  
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile ;—  
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,  
Sings in the sunbeam, of the transient  
shower  
Forgetful, though its wings are wet the  
while :—  
Yet, ah ! how much must that poor heart  
endure,  
Which hopes from thee, and thee alone, a  
cure !

*W. L. Bowles.*



**William Wordsworth**

(1770-1850)

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;  
And hermits are contented with their cells ;  
And students with their pensive citadels :  
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,  
Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,  
High as the highest peak of Furness Fells,  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :  
In truth the prison unto which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for me,  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound  
Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground :  
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs  
must be)  
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have  
found.



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.

The kine are couched upon the dewy grass ;  
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,  
Is cropping audibly his later meal :  
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal  
O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless  
sky.

Nòw, in this blank of things, a harmony,  
Home-felt, and home-created, seems to heal  
That grief for which the senses still supply  
Fresh food ; for only then, when memory  
Is hushed, am I at rest. My friends ! restrain  
Those busy cares that would allay my pain :  
Oh ! leave me to myself ; nor let me feel  
The officious touch that makes me droop again.

*William Wordsworth*

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COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE,

SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

- 1 EARTH has not anything to show more fair: *a*  
2 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by *a*  
3 A sight so touching in its majesty: *a*  
4 This City now doth, like a garment, wear *a*  
5 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare, *a*  
6 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples  
lie  
7 Open unto the fields, and to the sky; *a*  
8 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air. *a*  
9 Never did sun more beautifully steep *c*  
10 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill; *a*  
11 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep! *a*  
12 The river glideth at his own sweet will: *a*  
13 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep; *a*  
14 And all that mighty heart is lying still! *a*

IT is a beauteous Evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea ;  
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me  
here,  
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine ;  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;  
And worship'st at the Temple's inner  
shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous East in fee ;  
And was the safeguard of the West : the  
worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,  
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.

She was a maiden City, bright and free :

No guile seduced, no force could violate ;

And when she took unto herself a Mate,  
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.

And what if she had seen those glories fade,

Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;  
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid

When her long life hath reached its final  
day ;

Men are we, and must grieve when even the  
Shade

Of that which once was great is passed away.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !  
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough  
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;—  
O miserable Chieftain ! where and when  
Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do  
thou  
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :  
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,  
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind  
Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth,  
and skies ;  
There's not a breathing of the common wind  
That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;  
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.



*William Wordsworth*

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NEAR DOVER. SEPTEMBER 1802

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;  
And saw, while sea was calm and air was  
clear,  
The coast of France—the coast of France  
how near !  
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.  
I shrunk ; for verily the barrier flood  
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair  
A span of waters ; yet what power is there !  
What mightiness for evil and for good !  
Even so doth God protect us if we be  
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters  
roll,  
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity ;  
Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree  
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the  
soul  
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

*William Wordsworth*

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WRITTEN IN LONDON. SEPTEMBER 1802

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look  
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,  
To think that now our life is only drest  
For show ; mean handiwork of craftsman,  
cook,  
Or groom !—We must run glittering like a  
brook  
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :  
The wealthiest man among us is the best :  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :  
Plain living and high thinking are no more ;  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household  
laws.

*William Wordsworth*

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LONDON, 1802

MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour ;  
England hath need of thee ; she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters ; altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;  
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power:  
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like  
the sea ;  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

GREAT men have been among us ; hands that  
penned

And tongues that uttered wisdom—better  
none :

The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,  
Young Vane, and others who called Milton  
friend.

These moralists could act and comprehend :

They knew how genuine glory was put on ;

Taught us how rightfully a nation shone

In splendour : what strength was that would  
not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis  
strange,

Hath brought forth no such souls as we had  
then.

Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !

No single volume paramount, no code,

No master spirit, no determined road ;

But equally a want of books and men !

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwith-  
stood,"  
Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,—  
That this most famous Stream in bogs and  
sands  
Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue  
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and  
morals hold  
Which Milton held.—In every thing we are  
sprung  
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has  
tamed  
Great nations, how ennobling thoughts de-  
part  
When men change swords for ledgers, and  
desert  
The student's bower for gold, some fears un-  
named  
I had, my country!—am I to be blamed?  
But when I think of thee, and what thou art,  
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
But dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;  
And I by my affection was beguiled.  
What wonder if a poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child?

WINGS have we,—and as far as we can go  
We may find pleasure : wilderness and  
wood,  
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
mood  
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books,  
we know,  
Are a substantial world, both pure and  
good :  
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh  
and blood,  
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plenteous  
store ;  
Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
To which I listen with a ready ear ;  
Two shall be named, pre-eminently  
dear,—  
The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
Lamb.

ADMONITION.

WELL mayst thou halt, and gaze with bright-  
ening eye !

The lovely cottage in the guardian nook  
Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own dear  
brook,

Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !  
But covet not the abode ;—forbear to sigh,  
As many do, repining while they look ;  
Intruders—who would tear from nature's  
book

This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.  
Think what the home must be if it were thine,  
Even thine, though few thy wants !—Roof,  
window, door,

The very flowers are sacred to the poor,  
The roses to the porch which they entwine :  
Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the  
day

On which it should be touched, would melt  
away.



THE world is too much with us ; late and  
soon,

Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
powers :

Little we see in Nature that is ours ;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !

This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;

The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping  
flowers ;

For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;

It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;

So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,

Have glimpses that would make me less for-  
lorn ;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;

Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

WITH ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,  
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it  
showed ;

Some lying fast at anchor in the road,  
Some veering up and down, one knew not  
why.

A goodly vessel did I then espy  
Come like a giant from a haven broad ;  
And lustily along the bay she strode,  
Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.  
This ship was nought to me, nor I to her,  
Yet I pursued her with a lover's look ;  
This ship to all the rest did I prefer :  
When will she turn, and whither? She will

brook

No tarrying ; where she comes the winds must  
stir :

On went She,—and due north her journey  
took.

WHERE lies the land to which yon ship must  
go?

Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day  
Festively she puts forth in trim array ;  
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?  
What boots the inquiry?—Neither friend nor  
foe

She cares for ; let her travel where she may,  
She finds familiar names, a beaten way  
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.

Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?

And, almost as it was when ships were rare,  
(From time to time, like pilgrims, here and  
there

Crossing the waters) doubt, and something  
dark,

Of the old sea some reverential fear,  
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous bark !

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees  
Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds, and  
seas,  
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure  
sky ;—  
I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie  
Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melo-  
dies  
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard  
trees ;  
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I  
lay,  
And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any  
stealth :  
So do not let me wear to-night away :  
Without Thee what is all the morning's  
wealth ?  
Come, blessèd barrier between day and day,  
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous  
health !

*William Wordsworth*

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THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF  
SWITZERLAND

Two Voices are there ; one is of the Sea,  
One of the Mountains ; each a mighty  
Voice :

In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !  
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee  
Thou foughtst against him ; but hast vainly  
striven :

Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art  
driven,  
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :  
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is  
left ;

For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would  
it be  
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,  
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

TO B. R. HAYDON

HIGH is our calling, Friend !—Creative Art  
    (Whether the instrument of words she use,  
    Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
    Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
    Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to desert.  
And, oh ! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,  
    Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,  
    Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
    Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness—  
    Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind  
I turned to share the transport—Oh! with  
whom  
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,  
That spot which no vicissitude can find?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—  
But how could I forget thee?—Through  
what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss!—That thought's  
return  
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no  
more;  
That neither present time, nor years unborn,  
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

THERE is a little unpretending Rill  
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught  
That ever among Men or Naiads sought  
Notice or name!—It quivers down the hill,  
Furrowing its shallow way with dubious will;  
Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is  
brought  
Oftener than Ganges or the Nile; a thought  
Of private recollection sweet and still!  
Months perish with their moons; year treads  
on year;  
But, faithful Emma, thou with me canst say  
That, while ten thousand pleasures disappear,  
And flies their memory fast almost as they,  
The immortal Spirit of one happy day  
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.



AFTER-THOUGHT

(RIVER DUDDON)

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
As being past away.—Vain sympathies!

For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,  
I see what was, and is, and will abide;  
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;  
The Form remains, the Function never dies;  
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the  
wise,

We Men, who in our morn of youth defied  
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!

Enough, if something from our hands have  
power

To live, and act, and serve the future hour;  
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
Through love, through hope, and faith's  
transcendent dower,

We feel that we are greater than we know.

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky  
So fair as these. The feather whence the  
pen  
Was shaped that traced the lives of these  
good men  
Dropped from an angel's wing. With moist-  
ened eye  
We read of faith and purest charity  
In statesman, priest, and humble citizen.  
Oh, could we copy their mild virtues, then  
What joy to live, what blessedness to die !  
Methinks their very names shine still and  
bright ;  
Apart, like glow-worms on a summer night ;  
Or lonely tapers when from far they fling  
A guiding ray ; or seen, like stars on high,  
Satellites burning in a lucid ring  
Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

*William Wordsworth*

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INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,  
With ill-matched aims the Architect who  
planned—  
Albeit labouring for a scanty band  
Of white-robed scholars only—this immense  
And glorious work of fine intelligence!  
Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the  
lore  
Of nicely-calculated less or more ;  
So deemed the man who fashioned for the  
sense  
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof  
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand  
cells,  
Where light and shade repose, where music  
dwells  
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to  
die ;  
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth  
proof  
That they were born for immortality.

MUTABILITY

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
And sink from high to low, along a scale  
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;  
A musical but melancholy chime,  
Which they can hear who meddle not with  
crime,  
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.  
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that  
bear  
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
That in the morning whitered hill and plain  
And is no more; drop like the tower sub-  
lime  
Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
Its crown of weeds, but could not even sustain  
Some casual shout that broke the silent  
air,  
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

THE TROSSACHS

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
But were an apt confessional for One  
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn  
gone,  
That Life is but a tale of morning grass,  
Withered at eve. From scenes of art which  
chase  
That thought away, turn, and with watchful  
eyes  
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear  
than glass  
Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy  
quest,  
If from a golden perch of aspen spray  
(October's workmanship to rival May)  
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,  
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest.

*William Wordsworth*

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TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING STAR

COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND

THOUGH joy attend thee orient at the birth  
Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most  
To watch thy course when Day-light, fled from  
earth,

In the grey sky hath left his lingering ghost,  
Perplexed as if between a splendour lost  
And splendour slowly mustering. Since the  
Sun,

The absolute, the world-absorbing One,  
Relinquished half his empire to the host  
Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,  
Holy as princely—who that looks on thee  
Touching, as now, in thy humility  
The mountain borders of this seat of care,  
Can question that thy countenance is bright,  
Celestial Power, as much with love as light?

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH,  
WHERE THE AUTHOR WAS BORN, AND HIS FATHER'S  
REMAINS ARE LAID

A POINT of life between my Parents' dust,  
And yours, my buried Little-ones ! am I ;  
And to those graves looking habitually  
In kindred quiet I repose my trust.  
Death to the innocent is more than just,  
And, to the sinner, mercifully bent ;  
So may I hope, if truly I repent  
And meekly bear the ills which bear I must :  
And You, my Offspring ! that do still remain,  
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,  
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual pain  
We breathed together for a moment's space,  
The wrong, by love provoked, let love arraign,  
And only love keep in your hearts a place.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS  
LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT,  
WORKINGTON

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed,  
The Queen drew back the wimple that she  
wore ;  
And to the throng how touchingly she bowed  
That hailed her landing on the Cumbrian  
shore ;  
Bright as a Star (that, from a sombre cloud  
Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darts,  
When a soft summer gale at evening parts  
The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)  
She smiled ; but Time, the old Saturnian Seer,  
Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the  
strand,  
With step prelusive to a long array  
Of woes and degradations hand in hand,  
Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear  
Stilled by the ensanguined block of  
Fotheringay !



MOST sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
To pace the ground if path there be or none,  
While a fair region round the traveller lies,  
Which he forbears again to look upon ;  
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
The work of Fancy or some happy tone  
Of meditation, stepping in between  
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
If Thought and Love desert us, from that day  
Let us break off all commerce with the  
Muse ;  
With Thought and Love companions of our  
way,  
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her  
dews  
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

WHY art thou silent ? Is thy love a plant  
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air  
Of absence withers what was once so fair ?  
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant ?  
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—  
Bound to thy service with unceasing care,  
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant  
For naught but what thy happiness could  
spare.  
Speak, though this soft warm heart, once free  
to hold  
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and  
mine,  
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold  
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with  
snow  
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine ;  
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end  
may know !

COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING, 1838

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just begun,  
Yet nature seems to them a heavenly guide.  
Does joy approach? they meet the coming  
tide;  
And sullenness avoid, as now they shun  
Pale twilight's lingering glooms,—and in the  
sun  
Couch near their dams, with quiet satisfied;  
Or gambol—each with his shadow at his  
side,  
Varying its shape wherever he may run.  
As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy dew  
All turn, and court the shining and the  
green,  
Where herbs look up, and opening flowers  
are seen;  
Why to God's goodness cannot We be true,  
And so, His gifts and promises between,  
Feed to the last on pleasures ever new?

THOUGH the bold wings of Poesy affect  
The clouds, and wheel around the mountain  
tops  
Rejoicing, from her loftiest height she drops  
Well pleased to skim the plain with wild  
flowers deckt,  
Or muse in solemn grove whose shades protect  
The lingering dew—there steals along, or  
stops,  
Watching the least small bird that round  
her hops,  
Or creeping worm, with sensitive respect.  
Her functions are they therefore less divine,  
Her thoughts less deep, or void of grave  
intent  
Her simplest fancies? Should that fear be  
thine,  
Aspiring Votary, ere thy hand present  
One offering, kneel before her modest shrine,  
With brow in penitential sorrow bent !

*William Wordsworth.*

**Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

(1772-1834)

TO NATURE

IT may indeed be phantasy when I  
    Essay to draw from all created things  
    Deep, heartfelt, inward joy that closely  
        clings ;  
And trace in leaves and flowers that round me  
    lie  
Lessons of love and earnest piety.  
    So let it be ; and if the wide world rings  
    In mock of this belief, to me it brings  
Nor fear, nor grief, nor vain perplexity.  
So will I build my altar in the fields,  
    And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be,  
And the sweet fragrance that the wild flower  
    yields,  
Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee,  
    Thee only God ! and Thou shalt not  
        despise  
Even me, the priest of this poor sacrifice.

*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

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FANCY IN NUBIBUS  
OR THE POET IN THE CLOUDS

O IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,  
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,  
To make the shifting clouds be what you  
please,  
Or let the easily-persuaded eyes  
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the  
mould  
Of a friend's fancy ; or, with head bent  
low  
And cheek aslant, see rivers flow of gold  
'Twixt crimson banks ; and then, a traveller,  
go  
From mount to mount through Cloudland,  
gorgeous land !  
Or listening to the tide, with closèd sight,  
Be that blind bard who, on the Chian strand  
By those deep sounds possessed with inward  
light,  
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee  
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

*Samuel Taylor Coleridge.*

**Mary Tighe**

TO TIME

YES, gentle Time, thy gradual, healing hand  
Hath stolen from Sorrow's grasp the en-  
venomed dart ;

Submitting to thy skill, my passive heart  
Feels that no grief can thy soft power with-  
stand ;

And though my aching breast still heaves  
the sigh,

Though oft the tear swells silent in mine  
eye ;

Yet the keen pang, the agony is gone ;  
Sorrow and I shall part ; and these faint  
throes

Are but the remnant of severer woes :

As when the furious tempest is o'erblown,

And when the sky has wept its violence,

The opening heavens will oft let fall a shower,

The poor o'erchargèd boughs still drops  
dispense,

And still the loaded streams in torrents pour.

**Charles Lamb**

(1775-1834)

O LIFT with reverent hand that tarnished  
flower,

That shrines beneath her modest canopy,  
Memorials dear to Romish piety,—

Dim specks, rude shapes, of Saints ! in fervent  
hour

The work perchance of some weak devotee  
Who, poor in worldly treasures to set forth  
The sanctities she worshipped to their worth,

In this imperfect tracery might see  
Hints, that all Heaven did to her sense reveal.

Cheap gifts best fit poor givers. We are  
told

Of the lone mite, the cup of water cold,  
That in their way approved the offerer's zeal.

True Love shows costliest where the  
means are scant ;

And, in her reckoning, they *abound* who  
*want*.



**Joseph Blanco White**

(1775-1841)

NIGHT AND DEATH

MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent  
knew

Thou from report divine, and heard thy  
name,

Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,  
This glorious canopy of light and blue.

Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,

Bathed in the rays of the great setting  
flame,

Hesperus with the host of heaven came,  
And lo! creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay  
concealed

Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could  
find,

Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,

That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us  
blind!

Why do we then shun Death with anxious  
strife?

If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not  
Life?

**William Stanley Roscoe**

(1782-1843)

TO THE HARVEST MOON

AGAIN thou reignest in thy golden hall,

Rejoicing in thy sway, fair queen of night !

The ruddy reapers hail thee with delight :

Theirs is the harvest, theirs the joyous call

For tasks well ended ere the season's fall.

Sweet orb, thou smilest from thy starry  
height;

But whilst on them thy beams are shedding  
bright,

To me thou com'st o'ershadowed with a pall;

To me alone the year hath fruitless flown;

Earth hath fulfilled her trust through all her  
lands,

The good man gathereth where he had sown,

And the Great Master in his vineyard stands;

But I, as if my task were all unknown,

Come to his gates, alas ! with empty hands.

*Leigh Hunt*

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**Leigh Hunt**

(1784-1859)

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,  
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,  
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,  
When even the bees lag at the summoning  
brass ;

And you, warm little housekeeper, who class  
With those who think the candles come too  
soon,

Loving the fire, and with your tricksome  
tune

Nick the glad silent moments as they pass ;

Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,

One to the fields, the other to the hearth,  
Both have your sunshine ; both though small  
are strong

At your clear hearts ; and both were sent  
on earth

To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song :

In doors and out, summer and winter,  
Mirth.

THE NILE

It flows through all hushed Ægypt and its  
sands,  
Like some grave mighty thought threading  
a dream,  
And times and things, as in that vision,  
seem  
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—  
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands  
That roamed through the young world, the  
glory extreme  
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,  
The laughing queen that caught the world's  
great hands.  
Then comes a mightier silence, stern and  
strong,  
As of a world left empty of its throng,  
And the void weighs on us ; and then we  
wake,  
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along  
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take  
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

*Leigh Hunt.*

**George Gordon, Lord Byron**

(1874-1859)

ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind !  
    Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art—  
    For there thy habitation is the heart—  
The heart which love of thee alone can  
    bind ;  
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned,  
    To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless  
    gloom,  
    Their country conquers with their martyr-  
    dom,  
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every  
    wind.  
Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,  
    And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,  
Until his very steps have left a trace  
    Worn as if thy cold pavement were a sod,  
By Bonnivard ! May none those marks efface !  
    For they appeal from tyranny to God.

**Sir Aubrey de Vere**

(1788-1846)

THE CHILDREN BAND  
THE CRUSADERS. NO. V.

ALL holy influences dwell within

The breast of Childhood : instincts fresh  
from God

Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod  
Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin.  
How mighty was that fervour which could  
win

Its way to infant souls !—and was the sod  
Of Palestine by infant Croises trod ?  
Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,  
In all their touching beauty, to redeem ?

And did their soft lips kiss the sepulchre ?  
Alas ! the lovely pageant, as a dream,

Faded ! they sank not through ignoble fear ;  
They felt not Moslem steel. By mountain,  
stream,

In sands, in fens, they died—no mother  
near !

*Bryan Waller Procter*

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**Bryan Waller Procter**

(1790-1874)

A STILL PLACE

UNDER what beechen shade or silent oak  
Lies the mute sylvan now mysterious Pan?  
Once (when rich Péneus and Ilissus ran  
Clear from their fountains) as the morning  
broke,  
'Tis said the Satyr with Apollo spoke,  
And to harmonious strife with his wild reed,  
Challenged the God, whose music was indeed  
Divine, and fit for heaven. Each played,  
and woke  
Beautiful sounds to life—deep melodies;  
One blew his pastoral pipe with such nice  
care,  
That flocks and birds all answered him; and  
one  
Shook his immortal showers upon the air.  
*That* music has ascended to the sun;  
But where the other? Speak, ye dells and  
trees.

*Bryan Waller Procter*

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THE SEA—IN CALM

LOOK what immortal floods the sunset pours  
Upon us!—Mark how still (as though in  
dreams  
Bound) the once wild and terrible Ocean  
seems!

How silent are the winds! No billow roars,  
But all is tranquil as Elysian shores;

The silver margin which aye runneth round  
The moon-enchanted sea hath here no sound:  
Even Echo speaks not on these radiant moors.  
What! is the giant of the ocean dead,  
Whose strength was all unmatched beneath  
the sun?

No: he reposes. Now his toils are done,  
More quiet than the babbling brooks is he.  
So mightiest powers by deepest calms are fed,  
And sleep, how oft, in things that gentlest be.

*Bryan Waller Procter.*



**Percy Bysshe Shelley**

(1790-1882)

OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique land  
Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of  
stone  
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose  
frown  
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless  
things,  
The hand that mocked them and the heart  
that fed ;  
And on the pedestal these words appear :  
“ My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and  
despair ! ”  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

**John Keble**

(1792-1866)

AT HOOKER'S TOMB

THE grey-eyed Morn was saddened with a  
shower,

A silent shower, that trickled down so still  
Scarce dropped beneath its weight the tenderest flower,

Scarce could you trace it on the twinkling rill,  
Or moss-stone bathed in dew. It was an  
hour

Most meet for prayer beside thy lowly  
grave,  
Most for thanksgiving meet, that Heaven  
such power

To thy serene and humble spirit gave.  
"Who sow good seed with tears shall reap  
in joy."

So thought I as I watched the gracious  
rain,

And deemed it like that silent sad employ  
Whence sprung thy glory's harvest, to remain

For ever. God hath sworn to lift on  
high

Who sinks himself by true humility.

**Felicia Dorothea Hemans**

(1794-1835)

FLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT

WHITHER, oh ! whither wilt thou wing thy  
way ?

What solemn region first upon thy sight  
Shall break, unveiled for terror or delight ?  
What hosts, magnificent in dread array,  
My spirit ! when thy prison-house of clay  
After long strife is rent ? Fond, fruitless  
quest !

The unfledged bird, within his narrow nest,  
Sees but a few green branches o'er him play,  
And through their parting leaves, by fits  
revealed,  
A glimpse of summer sky ; nor knows the  
field

Wherein his dormant powers must yet be  
tried.

Thou art that bird !—of what beyond thee  
lies

Far in the untracked, immeasurable skies  
Knowing but this—that thou shalt find thy  
Guide !

**John Keats**

(1793-1821)

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

MUCH have I travelled in the realms of gold  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;

Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told

That deep-browed Homer ruled as his de-  
mesne ;

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and  
bold :

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies

When a new planet swims into his ken ;  
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes

He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—

Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead :

When all the birds are faint with the hot  
sun,

And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown  
mead ;

That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead  
In summer luxury—he has never done  
With his delights ; for when tired out with  
fun,

He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never :

On a lone winter evening, when the frost  
Has wrought a silence, from the stove  
there shrills

The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,  
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,  
The Grasshopper's among some grassy  
hills.

To one who has been long in city pent,  
    'Tis very sweet to look into the fair  
    And open face of heaven—to breathe a  
        prayer  
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.  
Who is more happy, when, with heart's con-  
    tent,  
    Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair  
    Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair  
And gentle tale of love and languishment?  
Returning home at evening, with an ear  
    Catching the notes of Philomel—an eye  
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,  
    He mourns that day so soon has glided by;  
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear  
    That falls through the clear ether silently.

AFTER dark vapours have oppressed our plains  
For a long dreary season, comes a day  
Born of the gentle South, and clears away  
From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.  
The anxious month, relieved from its pains,  
Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May,  
The eyelids with the passing coolness play,  
Like rose-leaves with the drip of summer rains.  
The calmest thoughts come round us—as, of  
leaves  
Budding—fruit ripening in stillness—autumn  
suns  
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves,—  
Sweet Sappho's cheek,—a sleeping infant's  
breath,—  
The gradual sand that through an hour-glass  
runs,—  
A woodland rivulet,—a Poet's death.

ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER

COME hither, all sweet maidens soberly,  
Down-looking aye, and with a chasten'd  
light,  
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,  
And meekly let your fair hands joinèd be,  
As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
Untouch'd, a victim of your beauty bright,  
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,  
Sinking bewilder'd 'mid the dreary sea :  
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death ;  
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary  
lips  
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her smile.  
O horrid dream ! see how his body dips  
Dead-heavy ; arms and shoulders gleam awhile ;  
He's gone ; up bubbles all his amorous breath !



WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming  
brain,  
Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry,  
Hold like full garnerers the full-ripened grain ;  
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,  
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And feel that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of  
chance ;  
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour !  
That I shall never look upon thee more,  
Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love ! then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,  
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

IF by dull rhymes our English must be chained,  
And, like Andromeda, the Sonnet sweet  
Fettered, in spite of pained loveliness ;  
Let us find out if we must be constrained,  
Sandals more interwoven and complete  
To fit the naked foot of poesy ;  
Let us inspect the lyre, and weigh the stress  
Of every chord, and see what may be gained  
By ear industrious, and attention meet ;  
Misers of sound and syllable, no less  
Than Midas of his coinage, let us be  
Jealous of dead leaves in that bay wreath  
crown ;  
So, if we may not let the Muse be free,  
She will be bound with garlands of her own.

TO SLEEP

O SOFT embalmer of the still midnight !  
Shutting with careful fingers and benign,  
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the  
light,  
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine ;  
O soothest Sleep ! if so it please thee, close,  
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing  
eyes,  
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities ;  
Then save me, or the passèd day will shine  
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes ;  
Save me from curious conscience, that still  
lords  
Its strength, for darkness burrowing like a  
mole ;  
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,  
And seal the hushèd casket of my soul.

KEATS' LAST SONNET

BRIGHT *STAR* / would I were steadfast as thou  
art—

Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,  
And watching with eternal lids apart,

Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,  
The moving waters at their priest-like task  
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask

Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—  
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,

Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,

Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

*John Keats.*

**Bartley Coleridge**

(1796-1849)

TO NIGHT

THE crackling embers on the hearth are dead ;  
The indoor note of industry is still ;  
The latch is fast ; upon the window-sill  
The small birds wait not for their daily bread ;  
The voiceless flowers—how quietly they shed  
Their nightly odours ; and the household  
ill

Murmurs continuous dulcet sounds that fill  
The vacant expectation, and the dread  
Of listening night. And haply now She  
sleeps ;

For all the garrulous noises of the air  
Are hushed in peace ; the soft dew silent  
weeps,

Like hopeless lovers for a maid so fair :—  
Oh ! that I were the happy dream that creeps  
To her soft heart, to find my image there.

TO SHAKSPEARE

THE soul of man is larger than the sky,  
Deeper than ocean, or the abysmal dark  
Of the unfathomed centre. Like that Ark,  
Which in its sacred hold uplifted high,  
O'er the drowned hills, the human family,  
And stock reserved of every living kind ;  
So, in the compass of the single mind,  
The seeds and pregnant forms in essence lie  
That make all worlds. Great poet, 'twas thy  
art  
To know thyself, and in thyself to be  
Whate'er love, hate, ambition, destiny,  
Or the firm, fatal purpose of the heart,  
Can make of Man. Yet thou wert still  
the same,  
Serene of thought, unhurt by thy own  
flame.

NOT IN VAIN

LET me not deem that I was made in vain,  
Or that my being was an accident  
Which Fate, in working its sublime intent,  
Not wished to be, to hinder would not deign.  
Each drop uncounted in a storm of rain  
Hath its own mission, and is duly sent  
To its own leaf or blade, not idly spent  
'Mid myriad dimples on the shipless main.  
The very shadow of an insect's wing,  
For which the violet cared not while it  
stayed  
Yet felt the lighter for its vanishing,  
Proved that the sun was shining by its shade  
Then can a drop of the eternal spring,  
Shadow of living lights, in vain be made ?

PRAYER I

THERE is an awful quiet in the air,  
And the sad earth, with moist imploring  
eye,  
Looks wide and wakeful at the pondering  
sky,  
Like Patience slow-subsiding to Despair.  
But see, the blue smoke as a voiceless prayer,  
Sole witness of a secret sacrifice,  
Unfolds its tardy wreaths, and multiplies  
Its soft chameleon breathings in the rare  
Capacious ether,—so it fades away,  
And nought is seen beneath the pendent  
blue,  
The undistinguishable waste of day.  
So have I dreamed !—oh, may the dream be  
true !—  
That praying souls are purged from mortal  
hue,  
And grow as pure as He to whom they pray.



PRAYER II

BE not afraid to pray—to pray is right.

Pray, if thou canst, with hope ; but ever  
pray,

Though hope be weak, or sick with long  
delay ;

Pray in the darkness, if there be no light.

Far is the time, remote from human sight,

When war and discord on the earth shall  
cease ;

Yet every prayer for universal peace  
Avails the blessèd time to expedite.

Whate'er is good to wish, ask that of Heaven,

Though it be what thou canst not hope to  
see :

Pray to be perfect, though material leaven

Forbid the spirit so on earth to be ;

But if for any wish thou darest not pray,

Then pray to God to cast that wish away.

*Hartley Coleridge.*

**Thomas Hood**

(1798-1845)

SILENCE

THERE is a silence where hath been no sound;  
There is a silence where no sound may be  
In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,  
Or in wide desert where no life is found,  
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep  
profound ;  
No voice is hushed—no life treads silently,  
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free  
That never spoke, over the idle ground.  
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls  
Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,  
Though the dun fox, or wild hyæna, calls,  
And owls, that flit continually between,  
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,  
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and  
alone.

DEATH

It is not death, that sometime in a sigh  
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless  
flight;  
That sometime these bright stars, that now  
reply  
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night,  
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish  
quite,  
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;  
That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal  
sprite  
Be lapped in alien clay and laid below;  
It is not death to know this,—but to know  
That pious thoughts, which visit at new  
graves  
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go  
So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves  
Over the past-away, there may be then  
No resurrection in the minds of men.

*Thomas Hood.*

**Chauncey Hare Townshend**

(1800-1868)

GIVE me thy joy in sorrow, gracious Lord,  
And sorrow's self shall like to joy appear !  
Although the world should waver in its  
sphere  
I tremble not if Thou thy peace afford ;  
But, Thou withdrawn, I am but as a chord  
That vibrates to the pulse of hope and  
fear :  
Nor rest I more than harps which to the  
air  
Must answer when we place their tuneful  
board  
Against the blast, which thrill unmeaning  
woe  
Even in their sweetness. So no earthly  
wing  
E'er sweeps me but to sadden. Oh, place  
Thou  
My heart beyond the world's sad vibrating—  
And where but in Thyself? Oh, circle  
me,  
That I may feel no touches save of Thee.

**Samuel Laman Blanchard**

(1804-1845)

**HIDDEN JOYS**

**PLEASURES** lie thickest where no pleasures  
seem :

There's not a leaf that falls upon the ground  
But holds some joy, of silence or of sound,  
Some sprite begotten of a summer dream.  
The very meanest things are made supreme  
With innate ecstasy. No grain of sand  
But moves a bright and million-peopled  
land,

And hath its Edens and its Eves, I deem.  
For Love, though blind himself, a curious  
eye

Hath lent me, to behold the hearts of  
things,  
And touched mine ear with power. Thus, far  
or nigh,

Minute or mighty, fixed or free with wings,  
Delight from many a nameless covert sly  
Peeps sparkling, and in tones familiar sings.

*Samuel Laman Blanchard*

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WISHES OF YOUTH

GAILY and greenly let my seasons run :  
And should the war-winds of the world up-  
root

The sanctities of life, and its sweet fruit  
Cast forth as fuel for the fiery sun;  
The dews be turned to ice—fair days begun  
In peace wear out in pain, and sounds that  
suit

Despair and discord keep Hope's harpstring  
mute;

Still let me live as Love and Life were one :  
Still let me turn on earth a child-like gaze,  
And trust the whispered charities that bring  
Tidings of human truth ; with inward praise  
Watch the weak motion of each common  
thing

And find it glorious—still let me raise  
On wintry wrecks an altar to the Spring.

*Samuel Laman Blanchard.*

**Sir William Rowan Hamilton**

(1805-1865)

**SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND OF LOVE**

O BROODING Spirit of Wisdom and of Love,  
Whose mighty wings even now o'ershadow  
me ;

Absorb me in thine own immensity,  
And raise me far my finite self above !  
Purge vanity away and the weak care  
That name or fame of me should widely  
spread ;  
And the deep wish keep burning in their  
stead

Thy blissful influence afar to bear,  
Or see it borne ! Let no desire of ease,  
No lack of courage, faith, or love, delay  
My own steps in that high thought-paven  
way,

In which my soul her clear commission sees :  
Yet with an equal joy let me behold  
Thy chariot o'er that way by others roll'd.

**Elizabeth Barrett Browning**

(1809-1861)

CONSOLATION

ALL are not taken ; there are left behind  
    Living Beloveds, tender looks to bring  
    And make the daylight still a happy thing,  
And tender voices, to make soft the wind :  
But if it were not so—if I could find  
    No love in all the world for comforting,  
    Nor any path but hollowly did ring,  
Where "dust to dust" the love from life dis-  
    joined,  
And if, before those sepulchres unmoving  
    I stood alone, (as some forsaken lamb  
    Goes bleating up the moors in weary  
    dearth)  
Crying "Where are ye, O my loved and  
    loving?"—  
I know a Voice would sound, "Daughter,  
    I AM.  
Can I suffice for HEAVEN and not for  
    earth?"



GRIEF

I TELL you, hopeless grief is passionless ;  
That only men incredulous of despair,  
Half-taught in anguish, through the mid-  
night air  
Beat upward to God's throne in loud access  
Of shrieking and reproach. Full desertness  
In souls as countries, lieth silent-bare  
Under the blanching, vertical eye-glare  
Of the absolute Heavens. Deep-hearted man,  
express  
Grief for thy Dead in silence like to death—  
Most like a monumental statue set  
In everlasting watch and moveless woe,  
Till itself crumble to the dust beneath.  
Touch it ; the marble eyelids are not wet :  
If it could weep, it would arise and go.

*Elisabeth Barrett Browning*

---

CHEERFULNESS TAUGHT BY REASON

I THINK we are too ready with complaint  
In this fair world of God's. Had we no  
hope  
Indeed beyond the zenith and the slope  
Of yon grey blank of sky, we might grow  
faint  
To muse upon eternity's constraint  
Round our aspirant souls; but since the  
scope  
Must widen early, is it well to droop,  
For a few days consumed in loss and taint?  
O pusillanimous heart, be comforted  
And, like a cheerful traveller, take the road,  
Singing beside the hedge. What if the bread  
Be bitter in thine inn, and thou unshod  
To meet the flints? At least it may be said,  
Because the way is *short*, I thank thee,  
God,

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

---

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE

BUT only three in all God's universe  
Have heard this word thou hast said ; Him-  
self, beside  
Thee speaking and me listening ! and re-  
plied  
One of us . . . *that* was God ! . . . and laid  
the curse  
So darkly on my eyelids as to amerce  
My sight from seeing thee—that if I had  
died,  
The deathweights, placed there, would have  
signified  
Less absolute exclusion. "Nay" is worse  
From God than from all others, O my  
friend !  
Men could not part us with their worldly  
jars,  
Nor the seas change us, nor the tempests  
bend ;  
Our hands would touch, for all the mountain-  
bars ;—  
And, heaven being rolled between us at the  
end  
We should but vow the faster for the stars.

UNLIKE are we, unlike, O princely Heart !

Unlike our uses, and our destinies.

Our ministering two angels look surprise  
On one another, as they strike athwart  
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee,  
art

A guest for queens to social pageantries  
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes  
Than tears, even, can make mine, to ply thy  
part

Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do  
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,  
A poor, tired, wandering singer? . . . singing  
through

The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?  
The chrism is on thine head,—on mine, the  
dew —

And Death must dig the level where these  
agree.

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

---

I LIFT my heavy heart up solemnly,  
As once Electra her sepulchral urn,  
And, looking in thine eyes, I overturn  
The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see  
What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,  
And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn  
Through the ashen greyness. If thy foot in  
scorn  
Could tread them out to darkness utterly,  
It might be well, perhaps. But if, instead,  
Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow  
The grey dust up, . . . those laurels on thine  
head,  
O my beloved, will not shield thee so,  
That none of all the fires shall scorch and  
shred  
The hair beneath. Stand farther off, then !  
Go.

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

---

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand  
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore  
Alone upon the threshold of my door  
Of individual life, shall I command  
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand  
Serenely in the sunshine as before,  
Without the sense of that which I fore-  
bore . . .

Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land  
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in  
mine

With pulses that beat double. What I do  
And what I dream include thee, as the wine  
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I  
sue

God for myself, He hears that name of  
thine,  
And sees within my eyes, the tears of two.

WHAT can I give thee back, O liberal  
And princely giver, . . . who hast brought  
the gold  
And purple of thine heart, unstained untold,  
And laid them on the outside of the wall,  
For such as I to take, or leave withal,  
In unexpected largesse? Am I cold,  
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold  
High gifts, I render nothing back at all?  
Not so. Not cold!—but very poor instead!  
Ask God who knows! for frequent tears  
have run  
The colours from my life, and left so dead  
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done  
To give the same as pillow to thy head.  
Go farther! Let it serve to trample on.

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

---

✓ If thou must love me, let it be for nought  
Except for love's sake only. Do not say,  
"I love her for her smile . . . her look . . .  
her way  
Of speaking gently, . . . for a trick of  
thought  
That falls in well with mine, and certes  
brought  
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day"—  
For these things in themselves, Beloved,  
may  
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love so  
wrought,  
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for  
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks  
dry,  
Since one might well forget to weep who bore  
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love there-  
by,  
But love me for love's sake, that evermore  
Thou mayst love on through love's eternity. ✓



*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

---

WHEN our two souls stand up erect and  
strong,  
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and  
nigher,  
Until the lengthening wings break into fire  
At either curved point,—what bitter wrong  
Can the earth do us, that we should not long  
Be here contented? Think. In mounting  
higher  
The angels would press on us, and aspire  
To drop some golden orb of perfect song  
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay  
Rather on earth, Beloved,—where the unfit  
Contrarious moods of men recoil away  
And isolate pure spirits, and permit  
A place to stand and love in for a day,  
With darkness and the death-hour rounding  
it.

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

---

How do I love thee? Let me count the  
ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and  
height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of  
sight

For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of every day's

Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.

I love thee freely, as men strive for Right ;

I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise ;

I love thee with the passion put to use

In my old griefs, and with my childhood's  
faith ;

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose

With my lost saints—I love thee, with the  
breath,

Smiles, tears, of all my life !—and, if God  
choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

*SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
frowned,*

*Mindless of its just honours: with this key  
Shakspeare unlocked his heart; the melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
wound;*

---

*A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;*

*With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;*

*The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf*

*Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned*

*His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp*

*~~It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-  
land~~*

*To struggle through dark ways; and when a  
damp*

*Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand*

*~~The Thing became a trumpet, whence he  
blew~~*

*Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!*

WORDSWORTH.

## NOTES

- P. 4.—“Prometheus, when first from heaven high.”

—In line 3 the printed copies (including that in *England's Helicon*, 1600) give “fond of delight.”

“Fond of the light” is Dr. Hannah's correction, from the Harleian MS. For the fancy of this sonnet, cf. Herrick, *Hesperides*, 565 :

“I played with Love, as with the fire  
The wanton Satyr did ;  
Nor did I know, or could descry  
What under these was hid.  
That Satyr he but burnt his lips ;  
But mine's the greater smart,  
For kissing Love's dissembling chips  
The fire scorched my heart.”

- P. 6.—“Happy ye leaves whenas those lily hands.”

—The lady of the sonnet—the Elizabeth whom Spenser married in Ireland on St. Barnabas' Day, 1594, and for whom he wrote his magnificent *Epithalamion*—was almost certainly Elizabeth Boyle, of Kilcoran by the Bay of Youghal, a kinswoman of the great Earl of Cork. Dr. Grosart (*Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Edmund Spenser*, vol. i.) has discovered a grant, made in 1606 by Sir Richard Boyle to Elizabeth Boyle, *alias* Seckerstone, widow, of her house at Kilcoran for

## Notes

half-a-crown a year. Now it is known that Spenser's widow married our Roger Seckerstone in 1603; and it is, to say the least, unlikely that there were two Elizabeth Seckerstones (unusual name!) in the neighbourhood at one time.

"Of Helicon, whence she derivèd is"—cf.

Sonnet 11, line 10: "My *Helice*, the lodestar of my life." *Helice*, it is suggested, stands for *Elisè*, Elizabeth.

P. 16.—"One day I wrote her name upon the strand."  
See note preceding. The strand of Kilcoran—three miles long—is famous.

P. 19.—"With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies!" "The last line of this poem," says Charles Lamb, "is a little obscured by transposition. He means, 'Do they call ungratefulness there a virtue?'"

P. 50.—"Full many a glorious morning have I seen."  
I suppose that in the last line ("Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth") "stain" = "be stained"—i. e. with clouds. But the context seems to suggest that "stain" may stand for "stain," "abstain."

P. 95.—"Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in Arms."  
The date "when the assault was intended"—or at least expected—"to the city" was Nov. 13, 1642. After Edgehill (Oct. 23) the Royal army advanced up the Thames valley upon London; took Brentford on Nov. 12; and on the following day advanced as far as Turnham Green, and were met by the Parliamentarians, 24,000 strong. The two armies "stood many hours in battalia facing one another." It seems to have been a case of "one was afraid and t'other didn't dare." In the end the Royal army, which was short of ammunition, withdrew to Colnbrook.

"The great Emathian conqueror"—Alexander the Great, who was said (see Mr. Mark Pattison's note for authorities) to have spared Pindar's house at the sack of Thebes, B.C. 333. Emathian = Macedonian.

## Notes

- "Sad Electra's poet"—Euripides. Milton's authority here is Plutarch, who tells that when the Lacedæmonians took Athens in 404 B.C. they were incited by the Thebans to raze the city to the ground. The decision was in suspense when, as the generals sat at wine together, a Phocian sang part of the chorus from the *Electra*, which so affected all present that they agreed at once it would be an unworthy act to destroy a city that had given birth to such poetry.
- P. 97.—"Daughter to that good Earl, once President." The Lady Margaret Ley was daughter of James Ley (1552—1629), made Lord High Treasurer in 1622, Lord President of the Council in 1628, and in that same year advanced to the earldom of Scarborough. His death coincided with the sudden breaking up of the third Parliament of Charles I., and is compared by Milton with the death of the Athenian orator, Isocrates ("that old man eloquent"), after the battle of Chæronea, B.C. 338, when Philip of Macedon destroyed the combined forces of Athens and Thebes. Isocrates (he was in his 99th year, by the way) died four days after receiving the news of Chæronea, just as Ley died four days after the dissolution of Parliament on March 10, 1629.
- P. 98.—"Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song." Henry Lawes, of the Chapel Royal, was Milton's friend from boyhood. He dedicated his book, *Choice Psalmes*, in 1648, to King Charles, then a captive. "It was this Royalist and Cavalier volume to which Milton supplied the recommendatory sonnet. Violent partisan as Milton was, he did not allow political feeling to sever the tie of early friendship, or of a common love of musical art."—*Pattison*. Line 4—"committing short and long." Lat. *committere*, to pair, to set together.
- P. 100.—"Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud." Not a general testimony to Cromwell's character, but addressed to him on a

special emergency. "The moment was one when the question of a 'maintenance for a godly ministry' was the uppermost question. The Presbyterian party, especially in London and Lancashire, wanted a state-supported church and tithes, or a provision in lieu of tithes, while the Independent party regarded with aversion any interference of the secular arm with spiritual things. The extreme view, shared by Milton, went so far as to look upon payment for spiritual ministrations as contrary to the gospel."—*Pattison*.

The "Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel" was a committee of the Rump Parliament, fourteen in number, having general supervision of church affairs, and, in particular, the duty of providing spiritual food for destitute parishes. To this committee "certain ministers," headed by John Owen, had offered fifteen Proposals, in which they asked that preachers should receive a public maintenance.

Line 14.—"Whose gospel is their maw"—cf. *Lycidas*. (written in 1637)—

"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,  
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake,  
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!  
Of other care they little reckoning make,  
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,  
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.  
Blind mouths! . . . ."

P. 101.—"Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old." Sir Henry Vane, the younger, born in 1612, and therefore forty years old at the date of this sonnet, was son of Sir Henry Vane, of Raby Castle, county Durham. He was governor of Massachusetts in 1636, but soon returned to England, entered Parliament, and was appointed Treasurer of the Navy. He took an active part against Strafford, and was principal mover of the

Covenant in England and the Self-Denying Ordinance. Although not a regicide, he suffered death on that ground in 1662.

Line 4.—"The fierce Epirot" is Pyrrhus, repelled B.C. 279; and "The African bold," Hannibal. Pattison quotes Duruy, *Histoire des Romains*, as saying of Hannibal in B.C. 203, "il se sentait vaincu par quelque chose de plus fort que son génie, les mœurs et les institutions de Rome."

- P. 102.—"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones." In Jan. 1655, the Duke of Savoy determined to make the poor Vaudois inhabitants of certain Piedmontese valleys renounce the simple forms of faith and worship they had inherited from days long before Luther, and conform to the Catholic religion. They remonstrated; and in April 1655, a crowd of hired soldiery poured into the valleys and revelled there for many days in rape, pillage, and savage massacre. The news took nearly a month to reach England; but when it came "a cry of horror went through the country . . . . A day of humiliation was appointed, large collections were made for the sufferers, and a special envoy was despatched to remonstrate with the Duke of Savoy." The government despatches in this business were written by Milton.

Lines 7, 8.—"that rolled Mother with infant down the rocks"—"A mother was hurled down a mighty rock with a little infant in her arms; and three days after was found dead with the child alive, but fast claspt between the arms of the mother, which were cold and stiff, insomuch that those that found them had much ado to get the child out."—*Account of the massacre by Sir William Moreland, Cromwell's Agent in Piedmont: published in 1658.*

- P. 104.—"Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son"—cf. Horace, *Carm.*, line 16, "O matre pulchra filia pulchrior." The Lawrence addressed



was one of the sons of Henry Lawrence, President of the Council in 1654.

- P. 105.—"Cyriack, whose grandsire on the royal bench." The mother of Cyriack Skinner was Bridget, a daughter of the famous Sir Edward Coke.

- P. 106.—"Cyriack, this three years' day these eyes, though clear." The allusion in lines 10—12 is to the *Defensio pro populo Anglicano contra Salmasium*, which Milton had persisted in writing, though warned by the physician of the probable consequences to his eyesight.

- P. 107.—"Methought I saw my late espoused saint." Milton on Nov. 12, 1656, married Catherine Woodcock, daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney. After fifteen months of married happiness, she died in child-bed, February 1658, her baby surviving but a month.

- P. 108.—"Cambridge, with whom, my pilot and my guide"—Richard Owen Cambridge (1717—1802), now chiefly memorable as the author of *The Scribleriad* (1751).

Line 2.—"Pleased I have traversed thy Sabrina's flood." Cambridge resided at Whitminster in Gloucestershire, close to the Severn, and on the banks of the Stroud which runs into that river. Cf. Chalmers' Memoir: "While he continued to cultivate polite literature, his more active hours were employed in heightening the beauties of the scenery around his seat; for this purpose he made the little river Stroud navigable for some distance, and not only constructed boats for pleasure or carriage, but introduced some ingenious improvements in that branch of naval architecture, which were approved by the most competent judges."—*Chalmers' English Poets*, vol. 18, p. 227.

- Pp. 122-3.—"It was the candle of Bowles that lit the fire of Coleridge," says Mr. Austin Dobson. In a copy of the *Sonnets* (first published in 1789) preserved at South Kensington, Coleridge writes

## Notes

of them as "having done his heart more good than all the other books he ever read excepting his Bible." They have now an historical rather than an intrinsic interest.

- P. 129.—"Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!" François Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture, son of African slaves, was born in San Domingo, 1743; appointed chief of the army of San Domingo by the Directory in 1796, and ruled the island with justice and vigour. In 1801, when Bonaparte sought to restore slavery in San Domingo, Toussaint resisted, but was compelled to surrender, and was sent to France, where he died in prison (1803).
- P. 148.—"Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense." The royal Saint is Henry VI. This favourite (but to my mind much over-rated) sonnet is taken, together with "Walton's Book of Lives" and "Mutability," from the Ecclesiastical Sonnets, part iii. (1822).
- P. 161.—"O lift with reverent hand that tarnished flower." "In a leaf of a quarto edition of the *Lives of the Saints*, written in Spanish by the learned and reverend father, Alfonso Villegas, Divine, of the Order of St. Dominick, set forth in English by John Heigham, Anno 1630, bought at a Catholic book-shop in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, I found, carefully inserted, a painted flower, seemingly coeval with the book itself; and did not, for some time, discover that it opened in the middle, and was the cover to a very humble draught of a St. Anne, with the Virgin and Child; doubtless the performance of some poor but pious Catholic, whose meditations it assisted."—*Lamb's Note*.
- P. 162.—"Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew." According to Coleridge "the finest and most grandly conceived sonnet in our language"; and according to Leigh Hunt, "Supreme, perhaps, above all in any language; nor can we ponder it too deeply, or with too hopeful a reverence."

Blanco White's "Night and Death" is now the classical instance of a man's attaining to enduring poetic fame by a single sonnet. It is not that the rest of his writings fell far below, but that practically he exhausted himself with this one great stroke, and wrote no more. The largest information on "Night and Death" (which has quite a literature of its own) will be found in Mr. David M. Main's *Treasury of English Sonnets*.

P. 164.—"Green little vaulter in the sunny grass." Written in friendly rivalry with Keats, whose sonnet on the same subject will be found on p. 174.

P. 165.—"It flows through old hushed Ægypt and its sands." This, too, was written in friendly competition—with Keats and Shelley. To my mind, Hunt fairly worsted Keats in the *Grasshopper and Cricket* sonnet; but there can be no doubt at all that with his sonnet on the Nile he bore the palm away from the two greater poets. Here are the rival sonnets:

"Month after month the gathering rains descend,  
Drenching yon secret Ethiopian dells,  
And from the desert's ice-girt pinnacles  
Where frost and heat in strange embraces blend  
On Atlas, fields of moist snow half depend.  
Girt these with blasts and meteors, Tempest dwells  
By Nile's aerial urn; with rapid spells  
Urging those waters to their mighty end.  
O'er Egypt's land of memory floods are level  
And they are thine, O Nile—and well thou knowest  
That soul-sustaining airs and blasts of evil  
And fruits and poisons spring where'er thou flowest.  
Beware, O Man—for knowledge must to thee  
Like the great flood to Egypt ever be."—*Shelley*.

"Son of the old moon-mountains African!  
Chief of the Pyramid and Crocodile!  
We call thee fruitful, and, that very while,  
A desert fills one seeing's inward span;  
Nurse of swart nations since the world began,

Art thou so fruitful? Or dost thou beguile  
Such men to honour thee, who, worn with toil,  
Rest for a space 'twixt Cairo and Decan?  
O may dark fancies err! they surely do;  
'Tis ignorance that makes a barren waste  
Of all beyond itself; thou dost bedew  
Green rushes like our rivers, and dost taste  
The pleasant sun-rise; green isles hast thou too,  
And to the sea as happily dost haste."—*Keats*.

- P. 173.—"Much have I travelled in the realms of gold." Cowden Clarke records that in his lodgings at Clerkenwell, one night in the summer of 1815, he and Keats sat together till daylight over a borrowed folio copy of Chapman's Homer; and that, when he came down to breakfast, at ten o'clock next morning, he received this now famous sonnet which Keats had found time to compose and send from the Borough.

Line 11.—"Cortez" is of course a mistake. The discoverer of the Pacific was Vasco Nunez de Balboa, and the date of the discovery, 1513.

- P. 174.—"The poetry of earth is never dead"—see note on Leigh Hunt's sonnet, *supra*.



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